The Story of the Laxdalers

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Chapter 1

Ketil Flatneb hight a man, the son of Bjorn Roughfoot. He was a mighty hersir in Norway and of great kin. He dwelt in Raumsdale in the Raumsdalefolk; that lies betwixt Southmere and Northmere. Ketil Flatneb had to wife Yngvild, daughter of Ketil Wether, a highborn man; their children were five: one hight Bjorn the Easterner, another Helgi Bjola. Thorun the Horned hight daughter of Ketil; she was wedded to Helgi the Lean, the son of Eyvind Eastman and of Rafarta daughter of Kjarval king of the Irish. Unn the Deepminded was yet a daughter of Ketil; she was wedded to Olaf the White, son of Ingjald, son of Frodi the Brave, whom the Svertlings slew. Jorun Manwitbrent hight yet a daughter of Ketil. She was mother of Ketil the Fisher, who took land at Kirkby. His son was Asbjorn, father of Thorstein, the father of Svart, the father of Sighvat the Law-sayer.

Chapter 2

In the latter days of Ketil came to pass the rule of Harald Hairfair, insomuch that no folk-king could abide in the land, nor any other men of might, save Harald had the ordering of their estate. But when Ketil learned this, that Harald the king had given to him, as to other men who bare sway, such a choice as to have his kinsmen unatoned, and even so be made an underling himself; thereafter he summoned a thing of his kinsmen and thus hove up his tale: Known to all of you are our dealings with Harald the king, and no need is there to tell of them, since greater need lieth on us to take counsel concerning the trouble which is on our hands. I know of a surety that Harald the king is our foeman. So seems it to me, that we may not look for trust thence. Methinks the choice of two things is given us, either to flee the land, or to be slain each in his place: but of that am I the more fain, to have the same death-day as my kin, and I will not lead you into so great trouble by my counsel; because known to me is the high courage of my kinsmen and friends, that ye will not be parted from us, though there may be somewhat of hardship in the following me. Bjorn Ketilson answereth: Shortly may I utter my will. I will do according to the ensample of men of worth, and flee from this land; meseemeth that I wax no whit thereby, though I abide at home the thralls of Harald the king, and they drive us from our own lands; or that I take death from them withal. At this was made good rumour, and it was thought to be valiantly spoken. That rede was agreed on, that they should fare from the land, forasmuch as the sons of Ketil were most eager therein, and none gainsaid them. Bjorn and Helgi would fare to Iceland, because they thought that they had heard much fair tidings thence: they said that good choice of land was there, and no need of fee to buy it: they gave out that whale-rights and salmon-hunting were plenty, and sea fishing at all seasons. Ketil answereth: To that hunting-stead may I never come in mine old age. Said Ketil then his thought, that he was minded rather for west over sea: for that he thought good livelihood was to be gained there. The lands were known to him far and wide, for far and wide had he harried.

Chapter 3

After that had Ketil a very great guesting. Then gave he Thorun the Horned, his daughter, to Helgi the Lean, as is afore written. After that Ketil makes ready for his faring from the land west over sea. Unn his daughter fared with him and many other his kinsmen. The sons of Ketil made for Iceland that same summer, and Helgi the Lean their sister's husband was with them. Bjorn Ketilson came with his ship west to Broadfirth, and sailed in up the firth and nigh to the southern shore of it, until a firth cut in to the land, and a high fell stood on the ness eastward of the firth. An isle lay a little way out from the

land. Bjorn saith that they will make some stay there. Bjorn went aland with some men and walked along by the sea; little space there was betwixt fell and beach; he deemed that place meet for a dwelling. Then found Bjorn his highseat pillars driven aland in a creek; they deemed that a sure token of where the homestead should be. Afterward Bjorn took to himself all the land betwixt Staffriver and Lavafirth and abode at that place which since hight Bearhaven. He was called Bjorn the Easterner. His wife was Gjaflaug, daughter of Kjallak the Old; their sons were these, Ottar and Kjallak. His son was Thorgrim, father of Slaying-Stir and of Vermund, but the daughter of Kjallak hight Helga; she was wedded to Vestar of Ere, son of Thorolf Bladderpate, who settled Ere. Their son was Thorlak, father to Steinthor of Ere. Helgi Bjola came in his ship south of the land, and settled all Keelness betwixt Coalfirth and Whalefirth, and dwelt at Esjubjerg till he was old. Helgi the Lean came in his ship north of the land and settled all Islefirth betwixt Mastness and Rowanness, and dwelt at Kristness. From these, Helgi and Thorun, is come the Islefirth kindred.

Chapter 4

Ketil Flatneb came in his ship to Scotland and gat good welcome from mighty men, because he was a man renowned and of high lineage; and they bade him choose there for himself such livelihood as he would have. Ketil stablished himself there, and all the host of his kindred, save only Thorstein his daughter’s son. He set himself straightway to the harrying, and harried wide about Scotland, and gat ever the better. Sithence he made peace with the Scots, and won the half of Scotland, and became king thereover. He wedded Thurid, Eyvind’s daughter, sister to Helgi the Lean. The Scots held the peace no long time, inasmuch as they betrayed him in time of truce. So saith Ari Thorgilson the Learned of the end of Thorstein, that he fell in Caithness. Unn the Deep-minded was in Caithness when Thorstein her son fell; and when she knew that Thorstein was slain and her father dead, then deemed she that she might not avail to raise strife there. After that she let build a round-ship privily in the wood; and when the ship was fully made, then did she fit out the ship, and had great store of wealth. She had away with her all of her kindred that were alive, and men deem that hardly hath the like been heard of, that a woman hath come away out of suchlike unpeac ewith so mickle wealth and so great a company. From this one may mark that she far surpassed other women, Unn had also with her there many men who were of mickle worship and high lineage. A man is named Koll, who was the most of worth of all the fellow-farers of Unn; that followed chiefly from his birth, for he was a hersir by degree. That man was also a-faring with Unn, who hight Hord; he likewise was a man of high lineage and of mickle worship. Unn steered her ship for the Orkneys, so soon as she was boun; there abode she a little space. There gave she in marriage Gro, daughter of Thorstein the Red ; she was mother of Greilad, who was wedded to Thorstein the earl, the son of Turf-Einar the earl, the son of Rognvald the Mere-earl; their son was Hlodver, father of Sigurd the earl, and thence is come the kin of all the Orkney earls. After that steered Unn her ship for the Sheep-isles, and made there again some stay; there gave she in marriage another daughter of Thorstein; she hight Olof; thence is come the noblest kin in that land; men call them Gata-shags.

Chapter 5

Now Unn makes ready to depart from the Sheep-isles, and makes it known to her ship’s company that she is minded to make for Iceland; she has with her Olaf Feilan, son of Thorstein the Red, and those of his sisters who were still unwedded. After that puts she out to sea, and well goes it with her voyage; and she comes in her ship south of the land at Pumice-ledge. There break they their ship in pieces. All the men were saved and the goods. Afterward fared Unn to meet Helgi her brother with twenty men. And when she came thither, he went over against her and bade her to his house with nine of her men. She answers wrathfully, and says that she has not known that he was so mean a man, and fares away. Now is she minded to seek to Bjorn her brother in Broad-firth; and when he learns of her journey, then

fares he over against her with a great company, and greets her well, and bids her to him with all her host; for he knew well the mood of his sister. That liked she right well, and she thanked him for his greatheartedness. She abode there all that winter, and was guested in most unstinted wise, since there was means enow thereto, and wealth was not lacking. And when spring came she fared over Broadfirth and came to a certain ness, and there ate the day-meal; that place is sithence called Daymealness, and there beginneth Midfellstrand. Afterward she held with her ship in along Hvammsfirth, and came there to a ness and abode there a space. There lost Unn her comb; that place sithence hight Combness. After that fared she over all the Broadfirthdales, and took to her lands. as wide as she would. Sithence held Unn with her ship in to the firth bottom; there were her high-seat pillars driven aland. That she deemed then a sure token where she should make her dwelling-place. She lets raise a homestead where sithence hight Hvamm, and settled there. That same spring that Unn set up house at Hvamm, did Koll take to wife Thorgerd, daughter of Thorstein the Red. That guesting took Unn upon her; she let all Laxriverdale pass from her with Thorgerd, and Koll then set up house with his wife on the south side of Laxriver. Koll was a man of the most note. Their son was Hoskuld.

Chapter 6

After that gives Unn of her landtake to many men. To Hord gave she all Horddale out to Roaring-leap-river. He dwelt at Hordlairstead; he was a mickle man of mark, and had famous offspring. His son was Asbjorn the Wealthy, who dwelt in Ornolfsdale at Asbjornsteads; he had to wife Thorbjorg daughter of Midfirth-Skeggi. Their daughter was Ingibjorg, who was wedded to Illugi the Black; their sons were Hermund and Gunnlaug Wormtongue; that is called the Gilsbekking kindred. Unn spake to her men: Now shall ye take wage for your work; no lack have we now of store to reward you for your toil and your goodwill. Moreover is that known to you, that I have given freedom to that man who hight Erp, the son of Meldun the earl: it is far from me that I should will it, that a man of so high lineage should bear a thrall’s name. Afterward Unn gave him the Sheepfell lands between Tongueriver and Midriver. His children were Orm and Asgeir, Gunnbjorn and Haldis, who was wedded to Alf-a-dales. To Sokkolf gave she Sokkolfs-dale, and he dwelt there till old age. Hundi hight a freed-man of hers; he was a Scot by race; to him gave she Hounddale. Osk hight the fourth daughter of Thorstein the Red; she was the mother of Thorstein the Black, the Wise, who first made the eke-week of summer. Thorhild hight the fifth daughter of Thorstein. She was mother of Alf-a-dales; many a man telleth up his kin to him. His daughter was Thorgerd wife of Ari son of Mar of Reekness, son of Atli, son of Ulf Squint-eye and of Bjorg Eyvind’s daughter, sister of Helgi the Lean. Thence is come the Reeknesskin. Vigdis hight the sixth daughter of Thorstein, and from her are come the Hofdimen in Islefirth.

Chapter 7

Olaf Feilan was the youngest of Thorstein’s children. He was a mickle man and stark, fair to look on, and the greatest man of his hands. Of him thought Unn more than of all men, and showed openly before men, that she was minded that Olaf should have all that she owned after her day at Hvamm. Unn was getting as then much fordone with eld; she called to her Olaf Feilan and spake: That has come into my thoughts, kinsman, that thou shouldst stablish thyself and take a wife. Olaf was well pleased, and said that he would trust to her foresight in the matter. Unn spake: So have I willed it, that thy wedding may be at the close of this summer, because then is it most easy to gather together store of all kinds; because it is much my mind that our friends may seek hither in great plenty, for my mind is that this feast shall be my last. Olaf answers: That is well spoken: but that woman alone will I wed, that shall rob thee neither of goods nor rule. That same autumn Olaf Feilan took to wife Alfdis; their wedding was at Hvamm. Unn had laid out mickle wealth on the feast, because she let bid widely men of mark from other countrysides. She bade Bjorn her brother, and Helgi Bjola her brother; they came,

and many men with them. There came Koll-a-Dales her granddaughter's husband, and Hord from Horddale and many other mighty men. The feast was fully thronged, and yet came in nowise near so many men as Unn had bidden, because that the Islefirthers had so long a way to fare thither. Eld was then weighing heavy on Unn, so that she rose not up before midday, and went to rest early. No man would she let seek speech of her from the time that she fared to sleep in the evening until that she was clad: wrathfully answereth she, if any asked her how it went with her. That day slept Unn longer than she was wont, and yet was she afoot when the bidden guests came; and went to meet them, and gave fair greeting to her kinsmen and friends: quoth she, that lovingly had they dealt with her, in that they had sought thither so long a way: I name thereto Bjorn and Helgi, but to all of you will I give thank, who are come hither. Afterward went Unn in to the hall, and a mickle company with her. And when the hall was fully dight, much did men mark what a brave feast was that. Then spake Unn: Bjorn call I to witness of this, my brother, and Helgi and my other kinsmen and friends; this stead with such plenishing as now may ye see, I handsel to Olaf my kinsman to hold and to rule. After that stood Unn up and said that she must go to that bower that she was wont to sleep in: she bade that each should have that for his disport that was most to his mind, but as for the common folk, ale should be their sport. So say men, that Unn hath been both tall and bigly made; she went fast out along the hall; men found words to one another thereover, that the woman was yet worshipful. Men drank through the evening, until that they thought it time to sleep. But on the morrow went Olaf Feilan to the sleeping-room of Unn his kinswoman: and when he came into the room, Unn was sitting up against the pillow, and she was dead. Went Olaf after that into the hall and told these tidings. Men deemed it marvellous how Unn had held to her state until her death-day; now was drunk all together the marriage of Olaf and the arvale of Unn. And on the last day of the wedding was Unn borne to that howe that was made for her. She was laid in a ship in the howe, and much wealth was laid in howe with her; after that was the howe heaped up. Olaf Feilan took over then the house at Hvamm, and the safeguarding of all the goods, by the counsel of those kinsmen of his whom he had summoned to him. But when the feast nears an end gives Olaf bounteous gifts to those men who were of most worth, before they fared thence. Olaf became a mighty man and a mickle chieftain; he dwelt at Hvamm till his old age. The children of Olaf and Alfdis were Thord Yeller, who had to wife Hrodny daughter of Midfirth-Skeggi (their sons were these, Eyjolf the Gray, Thorarin Fylsenni, Thorkel Kuggi); a daughter of Olaf Feilan was Thora, who was wedded to Thorstein Codbiter son of Thorolf Mostbeard; their sons were Bork the Thick and Thorgrim father of Snorri the Priest. Helga hight another daughter of Olaf; she was wedded to Gunnar son of Hlif; their daughter was Jofrid, who was wedded to Thorodd son of Odd-a-Tongue, and afterward to Thorstein son of Egil. Thorun hight yet another daughter of his; she was wedded to Herstein son of Thorkel, son of Blund-Ketil. Thordis hight a third daughter of Olaf; she was wedded to Thorarin the Lawman, the brother of Ragi. At that time, whiles Olaf dwelt at Hvamm, Koll-a-dales his brother-in-law fell sick and died. Hoskuld the son of Koll was yet a child when his father died; he was earlier fully come to his wit than the tale of his winters. Hoskuld was a fair man and well knit. He took to him the heritage of his father and the household; that house is known by his name, which Koll had set up; it is sithence called Hoskuldsteads. Soon was Hoskuld beloved in his household, for that a many stays were thereunder, both kinsmen and friends whom Koll his father had made for himself. But Thorgerd daughter of Thorstein, mother of Hoskuld, was then yet a young woman and a right fair one. She took no pleasure in Iceland after the death of Koll; wherefore she makes it known to Hoskuld her son, that she will fare to the outlands with such chattels as were her portion. Hoskuld saith that it forthinketh him mickle if they must part; yet he saith that he may not do in this against her will, more than in aught else. Afterward buys Hoskuld for the hand of his mother the half of a ship that was lying up at Daymealness. Then Thorgerd betook herself to the ship with mickle faring-goods. Now after that sails Thorgerd out to sea, and that ship had a good voyage and cometh to Norway. Thorgerd owned in Norway much husband's-kin and many kinsmen of renown ; they gave her good welcome, and bade her choose freely whatsoever she would take of them. Thorgerd took that in good part, and saith that she is minded to stablish herself there in the land. Thorgerd was not long a

widow before a man came to the wooing of her. He is named Herjolf; he was a landed man by estate, well-to-do and of mickle worth. Herjolf was a mickle man and a strong; he was not a goodly man to look upon, and yet a man most showy of fashion; of all men was he the best at fight. And when they were set about this matter, must Thorgerd answer for herself, as she was a widow; and by the counsel of her kindred she said not nay to the match, and Thorgerd was wedded to Herjolf and fared home to his house with him; there grew to be good love betwixt them. Thorgerd soon showeth it of her, that she is a most stirring woman; and his estate is now deemed far better than aforetime, whereas he has taken to wife such a woman as was Thorgerd.

Chapter 8

Herjolf and Thorgerd had been no long time together ere they gat a son. That lad was sprinkled with water and a name was given to him, and he was called Hrut. He was early mickle and stark as he waxed up: he was also better grown than other men, tall and broad-shouldered, slender amid most, and sound of limb, both hands and feet. Hrut was of all men the goodliest to look upon, even as had been Thorstein his mother's father or Ketil Flatneb: and he was the best knit of men in all manner of ways. Herjolf fell sick and died; men deemed that mickle scathe. After that Thorgerd would fain out to Iceland, and would visit Hoskuld her son, because that she loved him above all other men; but Hrut abode behind well lodged with his kinsfolk. Thorgerd went on her way to Iceland, and sought to Hoskuld her son in Laxriverdale. He welcomed his mother in seemly wise; she was well to do, and abode with Hoskuld till the day of her death. A few winters after fell Thorgerd sick to her bane and died. Hoskuld took all her wealth, but Hrut his brother owned half thereof.

Chapter 9

At that time Hakon Aethelstan's fosterling was ruler in Norway, Hoskuld was of his guard; he was each winter in turn with Hakon the king or at his own house; he was a man much spoken of both in Norway and in Iceland. There was a man hight Bjorn; he dwelt in Bear-firth, and there took land ; after him is the firth named. That firth cuts into the land northward from Steingrims-firth, and a neck runs out there betwixt them. Bjorn was a man of high lineage, and a wealthy. His wife hight Ljufa; their daughter was Jorun; she was a fair woman and mickle high-minded; she was also wondrous wise of wit. She was thought to be the best match in all the Western firths. Of that woman hath Hoskuld heard, and this therewith, that Bjorn was the best bonder in all the Strands. Hoskuld rode from home with nine men, and seeks to Bjorn the bonder in Bearfirth. Hoskuld gat there good welcome, forasmuch as Bjorn had a good tale of him. Afterward Hoskuld puts forward his wooing, and Bjorn answers well thereto, and saith that he thinks his daughter may not be better wedded, but yet he left the matter to her choice. But when this case was put before her, then answereth she on this wise: That knowledge only have we of thee, Hoskuld, that we will answer thee well in this matter, inasmuch as we think that well may it be for that woman who is wedded to thee; but yet must my father have most voice herein, for I may agree only to such thing as he will. Now the long and short of this business was that it was so settled, that Jorun was betrothed to Hoskuld, and much goods went with her; the marriage should be at Hoskuldsteads. Now rideth Hoskuld thence, this being done, and so home to his house, and he is now at home until that wedding should be made; Bjorn cometh south to the wedding with a gay company. Hoskuld also hath a many guests, both of his friends and kinsfolk, and that feast was most glorious; and when the feast was done, then fareth each man home to his homefolk with the best of friendliness and seemly gifts. Jorun Bjorn's daughter abideth thereafter at Hoskuldsteads, and taketh up the business of the household with Hoskuld: that was soon clearly seen of her management, that she should be wise, and of good avail, and well cunning in many ways, and ever somewhat high-minded : it was well with the dealings between her and Hoskuld, but not much seen in everyday matters. Hoskuld now came to be a mickle chieftain. He was mighty and eager, and lacked not wealth; he was

thought to be in no manner a lesser man than Koll his father. Hoskuld and Jorun had not come together long before they gat children between them. Their son was named Thorleik; he was the eldest of their children ; a second hight Bard. Their daughter hight Hallgerd, who afterward was called Longbreeks: another daughter of theirs hight Thurid. All their children were well-liking. Thorleik was a mickle man and strong, and most goodly to look on, of few words and unloving; men deemed that his temper foreboded that he would be no man of just dealing. Hoskuld said this ever, that he would most favour the race of the Strandmen. Bard Hoskuldson was likewise a fine man of his looks, and much stark; such ways had he with him that he might prove liker to his father's kin. Bard was a peaceable man in his upgrowth, and a man well-befriended. Hoskuld loved him the best of all his children. Now abode the household of Hoskuld with mickle blossom and worship. At that time did Hoskuld give Gro his sister in marriage to Veleif the Old. Their son was Holmgang-Bersi.

Chapter 10

Hrapp hight a man; he dwelt in Laxriverdale, on the north side of the stream over against Hoskuldsteads. That house hight afterward Hrappsteads; it is now waste there. Hrapp was son of Somerled and was called Slaying-Hrapp; he was Scottish on his father's side, but his mother's kin was of the South-isles, and there was he brought up: a mickle man was he and stark; he would not let go his cause, though there were some odds of men against him; and forasmuch as he was a hard man, as hath been written, and would not make amends for that which he did amiss, therefore fled he east over sea and bought for himself the land on which he dwelt; his wife hight Vigdis, and she was Hallstein's daughter; their son hight Somerled. Her brother hight Thorstein the Black; he dwelt at Thorsness, as hath been written afore; Somerled was there to fostering, and he had all the makings of a man in him. Thorstein had been married; his wife was then dead. Two daughters had he; the one Gudrid, and the other Osk. Thorkel Welt wedded Gudrid; he dwelt at Svignascarth: he was a mickle chieftain and full of wisdom; he was the son of Red Bjorn. Osk the daughter of Thorstein was wedded to a man of Broad-firth: he hight Thorarin. He was a valiant man and well-befriended, and was with Thorstein his father-in-law, because Thorstein was then sunk into eld, and much needed their management. Hrapp was to most men nowise friendly, and was meddlesome towards his neighbours: he let them know at times that his neighbourhood might be a heavy one for them if they held any other for a better man than he. But the bonders all took one rede, and they fared to Hoskuld, and told him of their trouble, Hoskuld bade them say to him if Hrapp doeth them any mischief; yet never shall he rob me either of men or fee.

Chapter 11

Thord Goddi hight a man; he dwelt in Laxriverdale, on the north side of the river. That homestead hight sithence Goddisteads. He was a man much well to do. No children had he. He had bought the land on the which he dwelt. He was a neighbour of Hrapp, and gat oft heavy dealings from him. Hoskuld saw to it with him, so that he maintained his dwelling-place. His wife hight Vigdis, and was the daughter of Ingjald the son of Olaf Feilan. Brother's daughter was she to Thord Yeller, and sister's daughter to Thorolf Redneb of Sheepfell. Thorolf was a very mighty man, and had good store. His kinsmen ever looked to him for aid. Vigdis was given in marriage rather for the wealth's sake than to her furtherance. Thord owned a certain thrall, who came out with him; he hight Asgaut. He was a mickle man and well knit, and though he were called a thrall, yet might few be accounted of as his equals though they hight freemen, and well could he serve his lord. More thralls owned Thord, though this one alone be named. Thorbiorn hight a man: he dwelt in Laxriverdale in the next steading to Thord up the water, and was called Feeble; he was well to do; his wealth was for the most part in gold and silver; a mickle man was he of growth and strong of his body; no scat-flinger was he to the simple folk. Hoskuld Koll-a-dales son thought this awanting to his renown, that he thought his homestead

worse housed than he would have it. Afterward buys he a ship from a Shetland man. That ship lay up in Blanda-mouth. That ship he fits out, and makes known that he is minded to fare out of the land; but Jorun wardeth the house and their children. Now put they out to sea, and fare well, and made Norway somewhat southerly; they came to Hordaland, whereas the cheaping town of Bergen hath since arisen. He putteth up his ship, and had there mickle might of kin, though they be not here named. At that time sat Hakon the king in the Wick. Hoskuld fared not to meet the king, because his kinsmen welcomed him with open arms. There was peace all that winter.

Chapter 12

Now it came to pass at the beginning of summer that the king fared to a folkmote which had been called together, eastward to Brentisles, and made peace for his land, even as the law ordained should be done every third summer. That gathering was appointed among the chieftains for the settling of those causes in which it was the king's part to give doom. It was deemed a pleasure-faring to seek to that gathering, inasmuch as thither came men from wellnigh every land of which we have tidings. Hoskuld put his ship forth; he would also seek to this gathering, because he had not met with the king the past winter. Thither also might men seek as to a cheaping mote. At this gathering was there a very great company; there was mickle sport, drinkings and trials of strength and all manner of glee. No great tidings came to pass there; Hoskuld fell in with many of his kindred who dwelt in Denmark. And one day, as Hoskuld went to his pleasure with certain men, he saw a tent richly dight apart from the other booths. Hoskuld went thither and into the tent, and there sat a man before him in raiment of fine web, and he had a hat of Garthrealm on his head. Hoskuld asked of that man his name. He named himself Gilli; but many know of me if they hear my byname; I am called Gilli the Garthrealmer. Hoskuld said that he had ofttimes heard him spoken of; he called him the wealthiest of those men who had been in the business of chapmen. Then spake Hoskuld: Thou wilt have there goods to sell us, that we would buy? Gilli asks what those comrades will buy. Hoskuld saith that he will buy a handmaiden, if thou hast such to sell. Gilli answers: There think ye to do me hurt in this that ye ask of me goods which ye trow I shall have not by me; and yet is that not surely known, whether it be so or not. Hoskuld saw that there was a curtain athwart the booth. Then Gilli lifted the curtain, and Hoskuld saw that twelve women sat within it. Then spake Gilli, that Hoskuld should go thither and look if he would buy any of these women. Hoskuld doth so. They sat all together athwart the booth. Hoskuld beholds these women carefully ; he saw that a woman sat out by the curtain's edge; she was ill clad. Hoskuld deemed the woman comely to look on, if aught might be seen of her. Then spake Hoskuld: How dear shall that woman be if I will buy her? Gilli answereth: Thou shalt weigh out for her three marks of silver. So reckon I, saith Hoskuld, that thou layest a heavy price on this handmaid; for that is the worth of three such. Then answereth Gilli: Rightly sayest thou herein, that I reckon her of higher price than others: choose now which thou wilt of these eleven, and pay therefor a mark of silver, and let this one abide in my hands. Saith Hoskuld: I must first know how much silver there is in that purse which I carry on my belt. He bids Gilli bring a balance, but he searches in the purse. Then spake Gilli: This matter shall fare guilelessly on my part; since there is a mickle blemish in the woman's fashioning, I will that thou know that, Hoskuld, before we strike this bargain. Hoskuld asketh what that may be. Gilli answereth: This woman is without speech; many a time have I sought to speak with her, and I have never got a word from her; it is of a surety my deeming, that the woman is unable to speak. Then saith Hoskuld: Forth with the steelyard, and let us see what weight is this purse that I have here. Gilli doth so. They weigh now the silver, and the weight of it was three marks. Then spake Hoskuld: So hath the business sped, that this bargain of ours may be made: take thou to thee this fee, and I will take this woman :I say that thou hast done in the matter in manly wise,in that thou wouldst in no wise play me false therein. Afterward Hoskuld went home to his booths; that same night lay Hoskuld by her. But the morning after when men fared to clothe them, spake Hoskuld: Little openhandedness is shown in that raiment that Gilli the Wealthy hath done on thee; yet true it is that it was a greater task for him to

clothe twelve than for me to clothe one. After that Hoskuld unlocked a chest and took out goodquean's raiment and handed it to her; this was in every man's mouth, that good raiment became her well. But when the chieftains had there spoken of all such matters as the law then had to deal with, that gathering was sundered. Afterward went Hoskuld to meet Hakon the king, and greeted him worthily, as was due to him. The king looked at him and spake: We would have taken thy greeting, Hoskuld, though thou hadst gladdened us somewhat earlier, and so shall it be even yet.

Chapter 13

After that the king welcomed Hoskuld with mickle blitheness, and bade him come aboard his ship; and abide with us so long as thou wilt tarry in Norway. Hoskuld answers: Have ye thank for your bidding; but now I have this summer much work to hand; this has had much to do with it that I have withheld me so long from seeking to you, that I was minded to get me housetimber. The king bade him hold his ship into the Wick. Hoskuld abode with the king for a space. The king gat him housetimber and let lade the ship. Then spake the king to Hoskuld : We shall not keep thee herewith us longer than it liketh thee, but yet hard will it be belike to get a man in thy stead. Afterward the king led Hoskuld to the ship and spake: I have tried thee as an honourable man, and this is next my mind, that thou sailest now for the last time from Norway while I am still the master here. The king drew a gold ring from his hand, of a mark's weight, and gave it to Hoskuld, and a sword gave he him, a second gift of price, which was worth half a mark of gold. Hoskuld thanked the king for his gifts and for all the worship that he had laid upon him. Then goeth Hoskuld a-ship-board and saileth out to sea. They had a good voyage and made the south of the land; then sailed they westward past Reekness and so past Snowfellness and in to Broadfirth. Hoskuld landed in Laxriveroyce; there lets he bear the lading out of his ship and setteth up the ship inside of Laxriver, and maketh a roof thereto; and the toft is now to be seen where he let make the roof. There tilted he booths, and that place is called Booth-dale. Then let Hoskuld flit those timbers, and that was easy, because it was no long journey. After that rideth Hoskuld home with some men and getteth good wel come, as is like to be; there had his goods been well maintained meanwhile. Jorun asked, what woman that was who was faring with him. Hoskuld answereth: So wilt thou think, that I am answering thee scoffingly; I know not her name. Jorun spake : Now must one of two things be, that the tale hath lied which hath been brought to me, or thou must have spoken with her so much as to have asked her name of her. Hoskuld said that he might not deny this, and saith to her the sooth, and bade her be kind to the woman; and said that it was much to his mind that she should abide there at home for her living. Jorun spake: I shall not chide thy harlot whom thou hast flitted out of Norway, though she know not good manners, but now methinks this is of all things most fitting if she be both deaf and speechless. Hoskuld slept by his goodwife every night after that he came home, but he was little with his harlot. To all men was plain the mark of greatness in her, and this therewith, that she was no simpleton. And at the latter end of winter Hoskuld's harlot bare a man-child. Then was Hoskuld called thither, and the bairn was shown him; it was seen of him as of the others that him-thought he had not set eyes on a fairer bairn nor one greater. Hoskuld was asked what name should be given the child. He bade the lad be called Olaf, because then had Olaf Feilan died a little before, his mother's brother. Olaf surpassed most bairns. Hoskuld bare much love to the lad. The summer after spake Jorun, that the harlot should take up some work or else get her gone. Hoskuld bade her be busied about him and his wife, and therewith look to her lad. Now when the lad was of two winters, then was he full-spoken and ran in all wise as a child four winters old. This came to pass one morning, that Hoskuld was gone out to see to his farm; the weather was fair; the sun shone and was not yet risen high in the sky; he heard the speech of men; he went thither, whereas a beck fell down the home-mead-brent; there saw he two men and knew them; there was Olaf his son and his mother; then it became plain to him that she was not speechless, because she spake much there to the lad. Then went Hoskuld to them, and asks her of her name, and said that she might not avail to deny him longer. She said that so it should be. They sat them down on the home-mead-brent. Then spake she: If thou

wilt know my name, then am I called Melkorka. Hoskuld bade her tell of her kindred more at length. She answereth: Myrkjartan hight my father: he is a king in Ireland. I was kidnapped thence fifteen winters old. Hoskuld said she had held her peace far too long over kin so goodly. Then went Hoskuld in and said to Jorun what new thing had come to pass in his faring. Jorun said they knew not what of truth she spake; she said that she could not away with strange folk, and so they stay this speech; Jorun was in nowise better to her than before, but Hoskuld somewhat more; and a little after, when Jorun went to sleep, Melkorka was drawing off her clothes and laid the footgear upon the floor. Jorun took the socks and smote her over the head therewith. Melkorka was wroth and set her fist to the nose of Jorun so that the blood flowed. Hoskuld came in and sundered them. After this he let Melkorka fare away and made a dwelling place for her up in Laxriverdale; that place hight since Melkorkasteads; it is now waste there; that is on the south of Laxriver. Melkorka setteth up house there; Hoskuld furnishes her with all things that she needed for the house, and Olaf their son fared with her. Soon is that seen of Olaf, as he waxed, that he would far excel other men for his comeliness sake and noble bearing.

Chapter 14

Ingjald hight a man; he dwelt in Sheepisles; they be in Broadfirth. He was called Sheepisles-priest. He was a wealthy man and overbearing. Hall hight his brother; he was a mickle man and hopeful. He was a man of little goods. No useful man was he called of most men. Those brethren were for the most part not of one mind; Hall seemed to Ingjald little willing to suit himself to the ways of men of valour, but to Hall seemed Ingjald little willing to uplift his cause in manly wise. That fishing-stead lieth in Broadfirth, which hight Bearisles; those isles lie many together and were much gainful. At that time men sought much thither for the fishing; there was a great number of men there at all seasons. Wise men thought that much lay thereon, that men should be on good terms in outlying places; this was also said, that men would fare less well in the take of fish, if misunderstandings came to pass : and most men gave good heed thereto. This is told, that one summer Hall the brother of Ingjald the Sheepisles-priest came to Bearisles and was minded for the fishing; he took wage with that man who hight Thorolf. He was a Broadfirth man, and he was wellnigh a feeless iosel, and yet an active man. Hall is there for a space, and is thought much to excel other men. Now it came to pass one evening that they came aland, Hall and Thorolf, and should part their catch; Hall would both choose and deal, because he was there deemed to be the mightier man. Thorolf would not let go his lot, and full big were his words; some words were bandied about, and each held to his own way; then Hall catches up a hewing-iron that lay by him and will smite at the head of Thorolf; now run men between them and stay Hall, but he was wood wroth, and yet gat he not his way as at that time, and their catch was not parted between them. Now Thorolf takes himself off that evening, but Hall alone took the catch that both of them had made, because the odds of might were plain to see. Now gets Hall a man in the stead of Thorolf on the ship and holds on with the fishing as aforetime. Thorolf liketh his lot ill; himseems that he is put to much shame in these dealings; he abides yet in the isles and has it of a surety in his heart to repay this trick, wherein he had been so scurvily entreated. Hall feared not for himself, and troweth that no man may dare to withstand him there in his own country. It came to pass one day of fair weather, that Hall was rowing, and they were three aboard; the fish bite well that day; at eventide they row home and are much merry. Thorolf has news of the doings of Hall that day, and is standing at the jetty in the evening when Hall and his fellows come aland. Hall was rowing in the bows; he leaps overboard and is minded to take hold of the boat, and as he leaps aland, then is Thorolf standing there nearby and straightway hews at him; the blow came on the neck by the shoulders, and the head flieth off. Thorolf turns away after that; but those fellows of Hall storm over him. These tidings now become known through the isles, even the slaying of Hall, and they were deemed mickle tidings, because the man was of high lineage, though he had been no wealthy man. Thorolf seeks now forth out of the isles, because he knows that it was not to be looked for of any of those men, that he would furnish him with shelter after that deed of his. He had there moreover no kinsmen in whom he might place his trust, and

those men sat near by who assuredly were like to lie in wait for his life, and had mickle power, such as was Ingjald the Sheepisles-priest, brother of Hall. Thorolf got for himself a flitting in to the mainland. He went much with hidden head. Nought is told of his faring until he cometh one day at even to Goddisteads. Vigdis, wife to Thord Goddi, was something akin to Thorolf, and so he turned him thither to the steading. Thorolf had learned hereof before how things were wont to be there, that Vigdis was more lofty of mood than Thord her goodman; and straightway in the evening when Thorolf was come there he goeth to a meeting with Vigdis, and tells her of his trouble and prays for aid of her. Vigdis answereth his speech after this fashion: I deny not the tie betwixt us two: moreover only in this way I deem of this deed that thou hast done, to call thee no worse man therefor; and yet meseems it thus, that those will risk both themselves and their goods who give thee aid, so great men are they who will be seeking for thee here ; But Thord my goodman, saith she, is no mickle man of valour; and the help of us women is ever of little avail if there be any need thereof; and yet I am not willing to turn away from thee altogether, since thou hast looked to us for some aid. After that Vigdis leadeth him to an outbower, and bids him bide her there; she sets the latch thereto. Then went she to Thord and spake: Here is come a man to guesting who hight Thorolf, and he is something akin to me; he may well need to abide here some length of time if thou will that so it be. Thord said that the abiding of men liked him not; he bade him tarry there for the next day, if nought were on his hands, but else to fare away at his swiftest. Vigdis answers : Already have I promised him guesting, and that word may I not take back, though he be not an even friend to all men. After that she told Thord of the slaying of Hall, and this therewith that Thorolf who was then come thither had slain him. Thord was ill pleased at that; he said that he knew of a surety that Ingjald would take mickle fee of him for this shelter which hath now been given him; if here have doors been locked upon this man. Vigdis answers : Ingjald shall take no fee of thee for one night’s shelter, because the man shall abide here all through the winter. Thord spake: That way mayst thou best win the game of me, and yet it is all against my will that so hapless a man be here. But yet was Thorolf there through the winter. This learned Ingjald, who had to deal with the cause of his brother. He makes ready to fare into the dales at the end of the winter, and put out a ferry which he owned. They were twelve in all; they sail east with a fresh northwester and land in Laxriveroyce in the evening; they lay up the boat and fare to Goddisteads that same evening, and come not unlooked for: good cheer is made them there. Ingjald came to speech with Thord and told him his errand; he said he had learned how Thorolf his brother’s bane was there. Thord said that it was no matter of his. Ingjald bade him not wrangle; and we will make this bargain together, that thou give up the man to me, and suffer me not to need toil thereto, but I have here three marks of silver; these shall be thine own: I will also give over my claim against thee which thou hast brought on thine hands in the sheltering of Thorolf. The fee seemed good to Thord; and the dropping was promised him of that claim which he had before most feared, that he might suffer feescathe thereby. Then spake Thord: Now shall I get me an ill name among men for this talk of ours, and yet shall this our bargain stand. They slept until the night was far spent and the day was at hand.

Chapter 15

Sithence stood up Ingjald and his folk and clad them. Vigdis asked Thord what had been spoken of between Ingjald and himself overnight. He said then that many things had been spoken of, but it came to this, that a ransacking was to be made, but they should be out of the case if Thorolf was not found there: I bade now Asgaut my thrall lead the man away hence. Vigdis said that she had no liking for lies; she said also that it was loathly to her, that Ingjald should pry about her house, but bade him have his way herein; then Ingjald ransacked there and found not the man. At that time came Asgaut back, and Vigdis asked him where he had parted from Thorolf. Asgaut answers: I went with him to our sheephouses as Thord bade me. Vigdis spake: Can aught be more agate of Ingjald than this, whenas he fareth to his ship? And the risk must not be run of their having taken this rede among them yes-tereve; I will then that thou fare straightway and lead him away hence with all speed; thou shalt lead him to

Sheepfell unto Thorolf. Withal if thou doest as I bid thee, thou shalt gain somewhat thereby; freedom will I give thee and such fee that thou mayst fare whereas thou wilt. Asgaut yeasaid this and fared to the sheephouse and found Thorolf there; then he bade him fare forth with all speed. At that time rides Ingjald from Goddisteads, because he was minded to make sure of the worth of his silver, and when he was come down from the farmstead, then see they two men fare over against them, and there were Asgaut and Thorolf. This was early in the morning, so that little light was there of day. Now Asgaut and Thorolf were come into so sore strait, that Ingjald was on the one hand, and Laxriver on the other. The river was exceeding mighty; icefloes were on both sides, but it was broken in the midst, and the river was right ill to pass. Thorolf spake to Asgaut: Now methinks we shall have choice of two things to hand: that is one choice, to abide them here by the river and ward us as far as valiancy and manliness may avail us; and yet is it more like that Ingjald's folk will take our life full soon; that is the other choice, to make for the river, and yet that must be held to have some risk with it. Asgaut bids him choose ; he said that now he might in no wise part from him, which rede soever thou wilt take herein. Thorolf answers: To the river shall we betake us; and so do they; they array themselves as lightly as may be. Then go they out over the icefloes and take to the open water; and inasmuch as the men were stout fellows, and longer life was allotted them, so came they over the river and up on to the icefloes on the further bank. It is well-nigh at the same time as they are come over the river, that Ingjald cometh on the other hand to the river, and his faring-fellows. Then taketh up Ingjald the word and spake to his fellows: What is now to devise? Shall we take to the river or forbear? They said that he must rule, said likewise that his foresight should avail them; yet seemed the river to them impassable. Ingjald said that it was so: and we must turn away from the river. But when Thorolf and his fellow saw this, that Ingjald's company are not taking to the river, then wring they first their clothes and make them ready to go, and then they go all day; they come at evening to Sheepfell. They gat good greeting there, because there was guesting for all men. And that evening straightway goeth Asgaut to speech with Thorolf Redneb, and told him all that had come to pass concerning their errand, that Vigdis his kinswoman had sent him this man who was thither come to hold and guard: he told him all, how things had fared betwixt him and Thord Goddi; therewith he bare forth those tokens that Vigdis had sent to Thorolf. Thorolf answereth in this wise: I may not gainsay these tokens; I will surely take in this man at her bidding: methinks Vigdis hath fared in manly fashion herein; mickle grief is it that such-like a quean hath so ill-favoured a match: thou, Asgaut, shalt abide here for such time as it liketh thee. Asgaut said that he might not abide there long. Thorolf takes in now his namesake and maketh him a follower of his; but he and Asgaut part good friends, and Asgaut fareth homeward. Now is it to be told of Ingjald, that he turneth back to Goddisteads, when Thorolf and his fellow had gotten them away: then were come thither men from the nighest steads at the bidding of Vigdis: there were carles at hand not fewer than twenty. But when Ingjald and his folk are come to the steading, then calleth he Thord to him, and spake to him thus : Unmanly hast thou dealt with us, Thord, quoth he, whereas we hold it for sooth that thou hast flitted the man hence. Thord said that he had nought on his hands in this matter; now cometh out all the counsel of those twain, Ingjald and Thord Goddi, to wit. Ingjald will now have the fee that he hath placed in the hands of Thord. Vigdis was then standing near by as they talked, and saith that it hath fared with them even as was fitting : she biddeth Thord not hold to that fee; because thou, Thord, quoth she, hast earned this fee unmanly. Thord said that she must needs have her will herein. After that goeth Vigdis in and to the ark that Thord owned; and findeth in the nether part thereof a thick fee-purse: she taketh up the purse and goeth out with it and so to where Ingjald was, and biddeth him take over the fee. Ingjald groweth clear-browed at this and reacheth his hand out toward the purse. Vigdis heaveth up the fee-purse and lets drive at his nose, so that straightway fell blood to earth; therewith she casteth at him many taunting words,and this with them, that this fee shall he never get back; she biddeth him fare thence. Ingjald sees that this choice is best for him, to wit, to take himself thence as speedily as may be; and he doth so, and letteth not his faring until he is come home, and is ill-content with his journey.

Chapter 16

At that time cometh Asgaut home. Vigdis greeteth him well, and asked if they had been made welcome at Sheepfell. He makes good report thereof, and telleth her of the last words which Thorolf had spoken. That pleased her well; Now hast thou, quoth she, fared well with thine errand and faithfully; now too shalt thou speedily learn what thy reward shall be. I give thee freedom, so that thou shalt from this day be called a free man; herewith shalt thou take over that fee which Thord took for the head of my kinsman; now is that fee better bestowed. Asgaut thanked her for the gift with fair words. Later that summer taketh Asgaut faring for himself in Daymealness, and that ship putteth out to sea: they had heavy weather but no long voyage; they come aland in Norway. Sithence fareth Asgaut to Denmark and stablishes himself there, and was deemed a valiant carle, and so leaveth the tale to tell of him. But after the areding of Thord Goddi and of Ingjald Sheepisles-priest, wherein they would devise bane to Thorolf the kinsman of Vigdis, she let enmity come betwixt them, and gave out her sundering from Thord Goddi; and she fared to her kin and told them of these things. Thord Yeller was ill pleased thereat, and yet abode in peace. Vigdis had no more goods away from Goddi-stead than her jewels. Those Hvamm-men let fare a word about that they were minded to claim the half of those goods that Thord Goddi had in ward. At this he becometh much downcast, and rideth straightway to Hoskuld, and telleth him of his trouble. Spake Hoskuld: Fear hath pierced thy breast ere now when thou hadst not to deal with so mickle overmight. Then Thord bade Hoskuld take fee for his helping and said that he would not be sparing therein. Hoskuld saith: Full sure is this, that thou wilt that no man have gain of thy goods so that thou agree to it Thord answers : Yet shall it not be so now, for I will gladly that thou take handsel of all my goods. Thereafter will I bid Olaf thy son to fostering and give him all my goods after my day, because I have no heir here in the land, and I deem that so will the goods be better bestowed than that the kinsmen of Vigdis should clapperclaw them. This yeasaid Hoskuld and lets bind it with fast pledges. That liked Melkorka ill; she deemed the fostering over low. Hoskuld said she did not look at it aright; Thord is an old man and childless, and all his goods I will make over to Olaf after his day; but thou mayst always see him whenso thou wilt. Thereafter Thord took to him Olaf, a lad of seven winters, and bore much love to him. That learn the men who had the suit against Thord Goddi; they deemed that the claiming of the goods was become harder than it was aforetime. Hoskuld sent to Thord Yeller good gifts, and bade him be not hurt at this, because they might not wrest any money from Thord in the way of law : he said that Vigdis had found no faults with Thord that were soothfast, or might suffice for divorcement: and Thord was no whit the worse man, though he sought for some rede to rid himself of a man who was wasting his substance, and was set round with bloodsuits as a branch with twigs. But when this word came to Thord from Hoskuld and therewith large gifts of money, then grew Thord Yeller calm, and said that himthought those goods well bestowed which Hoskuld warded, and he took the gifts; and thenceforth was there peace in this matter, and yet they were somewhat cooler than erst. Olaf waxed up with Thord Goddi and became a mickle man and stark; so comely a man was he, that his like could not be found. When he was' twelve winters old, he rode to the Thing, and to men of other countrysides that seemed well worth the errand, to wonder at him, so marvellously was he shaped. In like wise did Olaf dight him with weapongear and clothing. He was easily kenned from all men. Far better was the rede of Thord Goddi after Olaf came to him. Hoskuld gave him a byname, and called him Peacock. That name stayed by him.

Chapter 17

This is told of Hrapp, that he grew evil in his dealings; he made on his neighbours so mickle inroad, that they might hardly maintain themselves against him. Hrapp gat no gain of Thord after Olaf came to be afoot. Hrapp was of the same temper, but his strength waned because eld weighed heavy on him, so that he lay bedridden. Then called Hrapp his wife Vigdis to him and spake: I have not been a sickly weakling, saith he, wherefore it is most like that this disease shall end our life together : but when I am

dead, I will that a grave be dug for me in the orehall doorway, and ye shall set me down standing there in the doorway; I may then the more needfully look to my household stuff. After this dieth Hrapp. So was it done wholly as he had ordained, because she durst not do otherwise. But as ill as he had been to deal with when he lived, then waxed that greatly when he was dead, because he walked much. So say men that he did to death the more part of his household in his hauntings. He did mickle scathe to most of those who lived in the neighbourhood; the dwelling at Hrappsteads lay waste. Vigdis the wife of Hrapp made westward to Thorstein the Black her brother; he took her in and her goods. Now was it even as before, that men fared to Hoskuld and told him of those troubles that Hrapp worketh on men, and bid him devise somewhat therefor. Hoskuld said that so it should be; he fareth with some men to Hrappstead and let dig up Hrapp and bear him forth to where there was least going of herds near by or faring of men. After that the hauntings of Hrapp lessened somewhat. Somerled the son of Hrapp took his wealth after him, and it was both mickle and fair. Somerled set up house at Hrappsteads the next spring, and when he had dwelt there a little while, madness came on him, and he died a little after. Now hath Vigdis his mother to take to her all that wealth; she will not fare to the land of Hrappsteads : now taketh Thorstein the Black that wealth into his hands to ward it. Thorstein was then somewhat well on in years, but yet the stoutest of men and full hale.

Chapter 18

At that time hove up to manworthiness at Thorsness those kinsmen of Thorstein, Bork the Thick and Thorgrim his brother. Soonw as it seen of them that those brethren would then be the most men there and most looked up to; and when Thorstein marks that, then will he not be at enmity with them; he makes it known to men that he is minded to shift his dwelling, and was minded to set up house at Hrappstead in Laxwaterdale. Thorstein the Black made ready for his journey after the Spring Thing, but his sheep were driven along the Strands. Thorstein manned a ferry and went thereon with eleven men; Thorarin his daughter’s husband was there, and his wife Osk Thorstein’s daughter and Hild her daughter, who likewise fared with them, and she was of three winters. Thorstein fell in with a fresh southwester; they sail inwards through the streams into that stream that hight Coal-kiststream; that is by far the greatest of those streams that are in Broadfirth; ill sped they with their sailing, and that was the more so, that by then was come the ebbing of the sea, but the breeze was not friendly to them; for the weather was showery and the wind was strong when it grew clear, but blew little between-whiles. Thorarin steered, and had the braces of the sail round his shoulders, because it was throng on the ship; it was mostly laden with chests, and the bulk was piled high, but the shore was near at hand. The ship moved little, because the stream waxed fierce against them; then sail they on a skerry, but were not broken thereon. Thor-stein bade lower the sail as swiftly as might be ; he bade men take poles and push off the boat. Of this rede was trial made, and it failed, because so deep it was on both sides that the poles touched not bottom, and they must abide the flood: now grows it dry beneath the ship. They saw a seal in the stream all day, much greater than other seals. He fared in a ring about the ship all day, and was nowise short of foot: so seemed it to them all that man’s eyes were in him. Then bade Thorstein shoot the seal. They strive to do it, but may not avail. Afterward the tide flowed. And when it was wellnigh so that the ship would float, then drives there down on ,them a mickle squall and overturneth the ship; and now are all men drowned that were aboard her save one man only. He drave to land on a balk of wood; that man hight Gudmund; that place has since been called Gudmundisles. To Gudrid it belonged to take the heritage after Thorstein the Black, her father; she was wedded to Thorkel Welt. These tidings were widely noised, to wit, the drowning of Thorstein the Black and those men who lost their lives with him. Thorkel sendeth word straightway to this man Gudmund, who had come aland therefrom, and when he cometh to a meeting with Thorkel, then striketh Thorkel a bargain with him privily,that he shall so recount the story of the death of those men as Thorkel hath taught him. Now Thorkel claims a tale of him concerning this hap, whenas many men were by. Then saith Gudmund thus : quoth he that Thorstein was drowned first, then Thorarin his son-in-law -- so

belonged it to Hild to take the goods, because she was daughter to Thorarin -- then quoth he that the maid was drowned, because next of kin to her was Osk her mother; and she was the last to die: so fell all the wealth to Thorkel Welt, because to Gudrid his wife it belonged to take the goods after her sister. Now was this tale spread by Thorkel and his men, but Gudmund had before told it somewhat otherwise. Now deemed those kinsmen of Thorarin that story somewhat doubtful, and they gave out that they would not give trust to it untried, and claimed half the goods from Thorkel; but Thorkel held that he alone was the owner, and bade ordeal be made after their custom. This was then the ordeal at that time, that men should pass under the earth-collar; that is, a turf was carven out of a field. The ends of the turf should be fast in the field, and that man who was to undergo the ordeal should pass thereunder. Thorkel Welt misdoubts him somewhat whether it will have fared so with the loss of the men, as Gudmund and he had told it the latter time. The heathen men deemed they had no less at stake when such matters should be undertaken than Christian men deem they have now when ordeals are set. So was he cleared who went under the earth-collar, if the turf fell not upon him. Thorkel took rede with two men that they should make as if they fell out about some matter, and should be standing there near by when the ordeal was on hand, and should strike upon the turf so heavily that all men might see that they felled it. Hereafter cometh forward he who should take upon himself the ordeal, and even as he was come beneath the earth-collar, these men leap against one another with weapons, as they had been appointed thereto; they met together by the turf-bow and lie there fallen, and down fell the earth-collar, as was like to be. Then leap men betwixt them and part them; easy was that, since they were fighting only by seeming, Thorkel Welt sought for a word concerning the ordeal; now spake all his men, that well would it have ended, if none had harmed it. Then took Thorkel all the loose fee, but the lands of Hrappsteads lay waste.

Chapter 19

Now is it to be told of Hoskuld, that his estate is worshipful; he was a mickle chieftain. He had ward of mickle wealth which Hrut Herjolfson his brother owned. Many men spake thus, that somewhat might the wealth of Hoskuld be straitened, if he must pay up in full his mother’s heritage. Hrut is of the bodyguard of Harald Gunnhildson the king, and had mickle worship of him; that was mostly for this cause, that he was best tried in all feats of manhood; but Gunnhild the queen held him in so high esteem that she thought none to be his like within the court, either in words or in other matters. But yet when man-pairing was toward or talk was had of the valiancy of men, then was this clearly seen of all men, that Gunnhild deemed it to be out of light-mindedness or envy if any man were paired with Hrut. But inasmuch as Hrut had much store of wealth to look to in Iceland and noble kindred, then was he fain to look to them; now makes he ready his faring to Iceland. The king gave him a ship at sundering and made known that he had been proved a stout fellow. Gunnhild led Hrut to the ship and spake: Nought low shall this be told of, that I have proved thee to be a man of mickle doughtiness; because thou hast even valour with the best men here in the land, but thou dost surpass them far in wit. Then gave she him a gold ring and bade him fare well; then drew she her cloak over her head and went quickly home to the town; but Hrut steppeth aboard and saileth out to sea. He had a fair voyage and made Broadfirth. He saileth in to the isles. Then saileth he up Broadsound and landeth at Combness and bare the bridges aland. The coming of the ship was heard of, and this likewise, that Hrut Herjolfson was skipper of her. Nought welcome to Hoskuld are these tidings, and he fared not to meet him. Hrut setteth up his ship and fenceth it about. There built he a stead, that since night Combness. Then rode Hrut to meet Hoskuld and claimeth his mother’s heritage. Hoskuld said that he owed to pay him no money; quoth he, that his mother had not gone feeless out of Iceland whenas she came together with Herjolf. Hrut likes it ill, yet rode away as at that time. All the kindred of Hrut other than Hoskuld deal seemly by him. Hrut dwelt three winters at Combness, and ever claimed the money of Hoskuld at Things or other Law-motes, and was fair-spoken: most men held that Hrut had the rights of the case; but Hoskuld gave out that Thorgerd was not wedded to Herjolf by his rede, and said that he was by

law the guardian of his mother; and therewith was an end made. That same harvest afterward fared Hoskuld for a home-bidding to Thord Goddi. This learneth Hrut, and he rode with eleven men to Hoskuld-stead. He drave thence twenty neat; the like number left he behind. Then sendeth he a man to Hoskuld and bade tell him where he should seek for the cattle. The housecarles of Hoskuld leapt straightway to their weapons, and word was sent to those who were nearest and they came to be fifteen in all; each of them rode the swiftest he might. Hrut and his company saw not that any were riding after them till they were but a short way from the garth at Combness. Hrut's men dismount straightway and bind their horses, and go forward to a certain mell, and, said Hrut, there should they withstand them: quoth he that himthought, though slow it went with the claiming of goods from Hoskuld, it should not be told of him that he ran before his thralls. The faring-fellows of Hrut said that there might be odds against them. Quoth Hrut, he recked nought of that; the more they were, said he, the worse should they fare. Those Laxdalers now leapt from their horses and made ready to set on. Hrut bade his men take no heed of the odds, and leaps forth to meet them. He had a helm on his head, in one hand a drawn sword, and a shield in the other. He was of all men the best at fight. So wood was Hrut then, that few endured to follow him. Well fought both sides for a time, but soon those Laxdalers found that they were no match for such an one as Hrut was, because he slew two men at one onset. Then prayed the Laxdalers for peace. Quoth Hrut that they should surely have peace. The housecarles of Hoskuld were then all wounded that yet stood up; but four were slain. Hrut fared home and was somewhat wounded, but his fellows little or not at all, because he had put himself most forward. That place is called Battledale since they fought there. Then let Hrut hew down the cattle. This is told of Hoskuld, that he draweth men to him, when he learned the ransacking, and he rode home. It was wellnigh at the same nick of time that his housecarles came home. They told of their faring, no smooth one. Hoskuld waxed wood wroth thereat, and quoth that he is minded to take of him ransack and man-tine; he gathers men to him all that day. Then went Jorun the housewife to speak with him, and asks of his rede. He saith: Little rede have I taken, but gladly would I that somewhat else should be talked of rather than the slaying of my housecarles. Jorun answers: This mind of thine is perilous,if thou art minded to slay such a man as is thy brother; but some men hold that it would not have been without cause though Hrut had taken to him this wealth ere now; he has now shown this plainly, that he will no longer be cast out from what is his own, such kin as he is of. Now will he not have taken this rede to match himself against thee, unless he knew that some aid is like to come to him from the mightier men; because it is told me that wordsendings will have been borne privily betwixt Thord Yeller and Hrut; such matters I must needs deem heedworthy: Thord may well deem it good to help in such matters when so plain is the issue; this too thou knowest, Hoskuld, that since the dealings of Thord Goddi and Vigdis, there is no such blitheness between thee and Thord Yeller as aforetime, though at first the enmity of those kinsmen fell off thee by reason of fee-gifts. This too deem I, Hoskuld, saith she; that they think that ye bear exceeding heavily on their lot, thou and Olaf thy son. Now to us this seemeth the more redeful that ye make seemly offer to Hrut thy brother, because there is like to be rive of ravening wolf; I think it like that Hrut will take it well and fairly, because the man is told of to me as wise; he must be able to see that this is to the honour of both of you. Hoskuld was much appeased by the counsel of Jorun; he deemeth it to be the very sooth. Now fare men betwixt them that were friends of both, and bear a peaceword on behalf of Hoskuld to Hrut; and Hrut took it in good part; assuredly (quoth he) he would fain be at one with Hoskuld; he said that he had long been ready hereto, that they should knit up their kinship even as was becoming, if Hoskuld would grant him his due. Hrut said moreover that he would make amends to Hoskuld for such misdoing as he had done on his side. So then is this matter stablished, and peace is made betwixt those brethren, Hoskuld and Hrut: now they uphold good kinship thenceforward. Hrut looketh now to his stead and waxeth a mickle man of renown; he was not busied about most matters, yet when he took his part therein would he have his way. Now Hrut shifted his homestead and dwelt whereas it now hight Hrutsteads, even till he grew old: he made a temple in his home-mead, and are yet marks thereof; it is now called Trolls-path; thereby now goeth the highway. Hrut took a wife, and wedded a woman hight Unn, daughter to Mord

Fiddle. Unn left him; thereof arose the strife betwixt the Laxdalers and the Fleetlithings. A second wife did Hrut wed; she hight Thorbjorg; she was daughter to Arnmod. Yet a third wife had Hrut, but we name her not. Sixteen sons gat Hrut and ten daughters of these two wives. So say men, that Hrut was one summer at the Thing in such wise that fourteen sons of his were with him: it is told hereof, that this was deemed to be a thing of much account and might All his sons were valiant men.

Chapter 20

Now sitteth Hoskuld at home in his steading, and beginneth to sink into his latter age; but his sons are by now full grown. Thorleik makes his dwelling at the stead hight Combness; and Hoskuld giveth him the portion that should be his. After that he taketh a wife, and wedded a woman hight Gjaflaug, daughter to Arnbjorn, son of Sleight-Bjorn and of Thorlaug Thord's daughter of Head. That was a notable match: Gjaflaug was a fair woman and mickle masterful. Thorleik was no brawler, yet the greatest of champions. There was little love lost betwixt those kinsmen Hrut and Thorleik. Bard the son of Hoskuld abode at home with his father and mother: he upheld the household no less than Hoskuld. Of the daughters of Hoskuld not much is told here; yet are men come of them. Olaf Hoskuldson is likewise now come to man's estate and is the comeliest to look on of all men, such as men have seen. He was well dight both with weapons and raiment. Melkorka, the mother of Olaf, abode at Melkorkasteads as is aforewrit. Hoskuld now put off him the livelihood of Melkorka more than heretofore; him seemed, said he, that it was rather the part of Olaf her son, but Olaf said that he would furnish her with such help as he could give her. Melkorka deems that Hoskuld dealeth by her in unseemly wise; she hath it in her heart to do somewhat that he will deem nought good. Thorbjorn Feeble had paid most heed to the stead of Melkorka; he had come a-wooing her when she had dwelt there a short while, but Melkorka would have none of him. A ship lay at Boardere in Ramfirth. Orn hight the master thereof. He was of the guard of Harald the king, Gunnhildson. Melkorka moveth Olaf her son whenas they met together, for she will that he fare abroad to get knowledge of his high-born kindred; because I spake sooth therein, to wit, that Myrkjartan is of a surety my father, and he is king of the Irish ; and it is easy for thee to get passage on the ship at Boardere. Saith Olaf: I have spoken hereof to my father, and he makes light of it; such too is the fashion of my fosterer's wealth that it is most in lands and livestock, and he hath no Iceland-wares ready to hand. Melkorka answers: I will not that thou be longer called the son of a handmaid ; and if it letteth thee from faring that thou deemest thou hast over few goods, then will I the rather yield to be wedded to Thorbjorn than aforetime, if thou wilt take this journey upon thee; because methinks he will furnish thee with wares as much as thou canst have need of, if he may win me in marriage therewith; this gain is also herein, that Hoskuld will like these two things but ill, when he learneth either of them, to wit, that thou hast fared from the land, and that I have got me a goodman. Olaf bade his mother alone rule herein. Sithence spake Olaf with Thorbjorn, that he would fain take wares of him on loan, and great plenty thereof. Thorbjorn answereth : That may only be if I may win Melkorka to wife; then methinks my wealth will be as much thine own as that of which thou now hast charge. Olaf said that so should it be then; so talked they together of what they would; and this should all go forward privily. Now Hoskuld bade Olaf that he should ride with him to the Thing. Olaf said he might not go for stress of farmwork; he said that he would fain let make a lamb-fold by Laxwater. Hoskuld likes it well that he will give heed to the farm. Then rode Hoskuld to the Thing, but men betook them to the bridal at Lambisteads, and Olaf had all his way in the settlement. Olaf took thirty hundreds in wares before the sharing was made, and should pay nought in return. Bard Hoskuldson was at the bridal, and took part in all their redes. But when the feast was ended, Olaf rode shipwards, and met with Orn the master, and took passage with him. But before he and Melkorka parted from one another, she giveth into Olaf's hand a mickle finger-ring of gold, and spake : This treasure my father gave me for tooth-fee, and methinks it like that he will know it again if he see it. Yet again she put in his hand a knife and a baldric, and bade him give them to her foster-mother : I deem she will not naysay these tokens. And again spake Melkorka: I have dight thee

to go hence as best I can, and have learned thee to speak Irish, so that it shall be no matter to thee whereso thou comest aland in Ireland. Hereafter they sunder. Straightway was the wind fair when Olaf came a-shipboard, and they sail out to sea straightway.

Chapter 21

Now cometh Hoskuld home from the Thing and heareth these tidings. He liked them somewhat amiss; but forasmuch as his own kin had lot therein he was appeased and let things alone. Now Olaf's folk had a good voyage, and made Norway. Orn spurreth Olaf to fare to the court of Harald the king; he said that the king made good cheer to such as were in nowise better men than was Olaf. Olaf said that he would venture it. Now fare Olaf and Orn to the court and have there good welcome. The king straightway took note of Olaf for his kinsman's sake, and bade him abide with him straightway. Gunnhild made much of Olaf when she knew that he was Hrut's brother's son; but some men gave out that she had deemed it good sport to talk with Olaf though there had been nought else on his behalf. Olaf grew unglad as the winter wore. Orn asketh what it is grieveth him. Olaf answers: I have a journey on my hands, to fare west over sea; and I deem it of great avail that thou have a part therein, that it may be fulfilled this summer. Orn bade Olaf be not over-eager for this; he said that he knew nought by hearsay of any ships that should go west over sea. Gunnhild came into their talk and spake : Now do I hear you talk in such wise as hath never come to pass before, in that either of you will have his own way. Olaf greeteth Gunnhild well, but suffers not the talk to drop. Then goeth Orn away; and Olaf and Gunnhild take up the tale: Olaf tells her his mind, and likewise what he looked to come to him of this journey: he said that he knew in good sooth that Myrkjartan the king was his mother's father. Then spake Gunnhild: I shall find thee the means for this journey, that thou mayst fare in as brave array as thou wilt. Olaf thanketh her for her word. Then let Gunnhild make ready a ship and get men thereto; she bade Olaf name how many men he will have with him west over sea. But Olaf named sixty, and said that he deemed it of much avail that they should be liker unto warriors than unto chapmen. She said that so should it be. Now Orn alone is named of them that were with Olaf on the voyage. That company was full well dight. Harald the king and Gunnhild led Olaf to the ship, and said that they would fain add their good luck to the rest of the friendship which they had showed him : said Harald the king that this would be easy, inasmuch as they wotted that no goodlier man had come out of Iceland in their day. Then asked Harald the king of Olaf how old a man he was. Answereth Olaf: Now am I of eighteen winters. The king spake: Mickle men of might are such men as thou ; for thou art as yet little more than a child in years: but seek thou straightway to usward when thou comest back. Then the king and Gunnhild bade Olaf farewell. So they went aboard, and sail straightway out to sea. An ill voyage had they of it that summer; mickle fogs have they, but little wind, and that little unsteady; so they drave wide about the sea: it was so with most men aboard that seamaze came upon them. Thereafter it came to pass that the fog lifted, and the wind rose ; then they hoisted the sail. Then was counsel taken as to which way they should make for Ireland ; and men were not agreed thereon. Orn was for one way, but most men spake against him, and said that Orn was all mazed; those should rule, said they, who were the more part. Then was Olaf's rede sought for ; but Olaf saith : This will I, that those rule who have more wit; the worse methinks will avail us the rede of lewd men, the more they be gathered together. It was deemed to be ended when Olaf spake thus ; and Orn ruled in the lode-work thereafter. Now sail they nights and days, and have alway light winds. It came to pass one night that the watch leapt up and bade men wake as speedily as they might; they saw land, said they, so near them, that the stem wellnigh smote thereon; the sail was up, and there was full little breeze. Men leap up straightway, and Orn bade beat off from the land if so they might. Quoth Olaf: There are no means thereto in our case, because I see breakers everywhere astern of us ; do ye lower the sail at your swiftest; but let us take rede when it is daylight and men can mark this land. Then cast they out anchors, and these grip straightway. Mickle is their speech together all that night as to whither they be come; but when the daylight came, they knew that it was Ireland. Then spake Orn: This deem I, that

we are come to no good place, since we are far here from those havens or cheaping-steads where outland men may have peace ; because now are we beached like sticklebacks; and methinks such are the laws of these Irish that they will hold the goods wherewithal we fare to be their prey; for they let call it drift when the sea has ebbed less from the sternpost than here. Olaf said that no loss should befall them: but I have seen that there is a gathering of men ashore to-day: and these Irish set much store by the coming of our ship; I marked to-day when it was ebb, that an oyce ran up by yon ness, and the sea fell not wholly out of the oyce. But if our ship be not hurt, we may well launch our boat and flit our ship thither. The bottom was of mud whereas they had ridden on a hawser, and no plank of their ship was hurt. So Olaf and his folk flit her thither, and there cast anchor. But as the day wears, a great throng of men drifteth down to the strand. Then fare two men in a boat to the ship. They ask who beareth rule in that ship. Spake Olaf, and answers them in Irish, even as they spake to him. But when the Irish knew that they were Norsemen, then they set forth their law, that they should give up their goods; and then should no mischief be done them before the king had given doom on their case. Olaf said that such was the law if there were no speaker along with chapmen: but I can tell you of a sooth that these be men of peace; and yet shall we not yield us untried. Then the Irish whoop their war-whoop, and wade out into the sea, and are minded to haul the ship ashore under them: it was no deeper there than so as to reach to beneath their arms, or to the breechbelt of such as were tallest. But the pool was so deep where the ship rode that they found no bottom. Then Olaf bade men take up their weapons and man the ship from stem to stern. They stood so thick that it was wholly dight with shields. A spearpoint stood out by every shieldrim. Then went Olaf forth on to the poop, and was so clad that he was in a byrny and had a helm of red gold on his head. He was girt with a sword, and the hilt thereof was gold-bedight. He had a barbed spear in his hand; it was graven, and there was speech full fair thereon. A red shield had he, and thereon was drawn a lion in gold. But when the Irish see their array, fear pierces their breasts, and they deem that the taking of the goods will be no such easy matter as was looked for. Now the Irish turn back from their purpose, and flock together in a thorp. Then cometh a great uproar in their host, and they deem that it is now full clearly seen that this is a warship, and many more ships may well be looked for. They bring word now swiftly to the king: and this was easy, because the king was then afeasting but a short way off. He rideth straightway with a company of men thither whereas the ship was. It was not so far from the land to where the ship rode but that speech might well be had betwixt men. Oft had the Irish made assault on them with shooting, but Olaf's men were in no wise hurt. Olaf stood in such array as is aforewrit, and men marvelled much how glorious was the man who was the captain of the ship there. But when Olaf's shipmates see a mickle host of horsemen ride towards them (and that host was right proud of bearing), then are they silent, because them thought they had to deal with mickle odds. But when Olaf heard what was noised in his company, he bade them be of good heart; because now hath fair hap for us betid; now hail yon Irish Myrkjartan their king. Then rode they so near to the ship that the one part might hear what the other spake. The king asketh, who was master of that ship. Olaf telleth his name, and asked who was that doughty knight with whom he was speaking. He answereth: I hight Myrkjartan. Olaf spake: Art thou then king of the Irish? He said that so it was. Then the king asks for such tidings as are most told of. Olaf made good report of all things whereof he was asked. Then asked the king whence they had put out, or what manner of men they were. And again the king asketh more closely than before of Olaf's lineage, because the king marked that the man was proud, and would tell him no more than he was asked. Quoth Olaf: This shall I make known to thee, that we set forth from Norway, and these men are of the guard of Harald the king Gunnhildson, who are here a-shipboard. But this is to be told of my lineage, lord, that my father dwelleth in Iceland; he hight Hoskuld; he is a man of high lineage; but for my mother's kin I trow that ye will have seen more thereof than I, because Melkorka hight my mother, and it is told in very sooth that she is thy daughter, king; and this it is that hath driven me to so long a journey; and for me much now lieth upon the answer which thou givest to my tale. The king is silent, and speaks apart with his men: his wise men ask the king what is to be made of the tale which this man telleth. Answers the king: It is clear to be seen of this Olaf that he is a man of high lineage,

whether he be our kinsman or no; and this likewise, that he speaketh Irish best of all men. After this stood the king up and spake: Now shalt thou have answer to thy tale, that I will grant peace to all you shipmates; but for the kinship which thou claimest of us must, we speak further ere I give thee thine answer. Then they run the gangways to shore, and Olaf comes aland and his faring-fellows from the ship. Now marvel those Irish much what sturdy men at arms these men be. Then Olaf greeteth the king well, and doffeth his helm, and louteth to the king; but the king receiveth him with all blitheness. Then they come to speech together: Olaf setteth forth his tale anew and telleth his errand at length and with fair words. So endeth that business, that he said he had then on his hand the gold which Melkorka gave him at their parting in Iceland; and thus said she, that thou, king, gavest it her for a tooth-fee. The king took it and looked at the gold, and waxed wondrous red of face. Then spake the king: Sooth tokens are these: yet they have no lack whereby they are the less worthy of mark, because thou so much favourest thy mother that one may well know thee thereby. And for this cause will I surely acknowledge thy kinship, Olaf, by the witness of these men who stand near us and hear my speech; this also shall come of it, that I will bid thee to my court, with all thy company; but the worship ye shall have lies hereon, to wit, whether I deem that a man's might is in thee, when I have tried thee more. Then the king lets fetch horses for them to ride; and he sets men to make the ship snug, and to give heed to the lading that they had. Then the king rideth to Dublin: and men deem that mickle tidings, whereas there was afaring with him the son of his daughter who had been lifted thence a long while agone, when she was but fifteen winters old. And yet was the fostermother of Melkorka the most astonished at the tidings: she lay then bedridden, and was sick both by reason of sorrow and eld; and yet went she then staffless to meet with Olaf. Then spake the king to Olaf: Here is now the fostermother of Melkorka, and she will fain have tidings told her of thee concerning her daughter's welfare. Olaf greeted her with open arms and set the carline on his knee, and told her how her fosterling abode in good case in Iceland. Then Olaf gave her the knife and belt, and the carline knew the jewel and was fain even to tears; she said that so it was, that the son of Melkorka was both a man of proud bearing; and well doth that sit upon him. The carline was astir all that winter. The king sat little in peace, because there was then ever raiding in the westlands; the king drave before him that winter wickings and ravagers. Olaf and his company were on the king's ship, and that company was held somewhat ill to deal with by such as were against them. Then the king had speech with Olaf and his fellows, and took rede with them in all things, because Olaf was approved to be both wise and forward in all trials of manhood. But at the close of winter the king summoned a Thing and it was fully thronged. The king stood up and spake. Thus took he up the tale: It is well known to you that last harvest came hither the man who is my daughter's son, and of high lineage by his father's kin: Olaf has shown himself to be so mickle a man of his hands and wight that we have here no such men to set beside him. Now will I bid him take the kingdom after my day, because Olaf is better fitted than my sons to be a ruler of the folk. Olaf thanketh him for that bidding with much courtesy and fair words: and yet, he said, he might not well risk how the king's sons would thole it when Myrkjartan was departed: better was it, said he, to win swift worship than long dishonour : he would fain fare to Norway so soon as it was free of risk for ships to ply from land to land: little joy, said he, would his mother have if he came not back. The king bade Olaf have his way. Then was the Thing sundered. But when Olaf's ship was all-boun, the king goeth with Olaf to the ship, and gave him a spear done about with gold and a fair-wrought sword and much other wealth. Olaf prayed that he might flit the foster-mother of Melkorka abroad with him. The king said there was no need of this; and she fared not. Olaf and his folk went aboard their ship, and he and the king parted with full mickle friendship. After that sail Olaf and his folk out to sea. They had a good voyage and made Norway; and Olaf's faring is much noised abroad: now they lay up their ship. Olaf getteth him horses, and seeketh now to Harald the king with his faring-fellows.

Chapter 22

Olaf Hoskuldson cometh now to the court of Harald the king; and the king gave him good welcome, yet Gunnhild far better. They bade him abide with them, and laid many words thereto. Olaf yeasaith that, and he and Orn both fare to the king's court. The king and Gunnhild laid so mickle worship on Olaf that no outland man had won such worship of them. Olaf gave the king and Gunnhild many few-seen gifts, which he had won westaway in Ireland. Harald gave Olaf at Yule a suit of raiment wholly carven out of scarlet cloth. Now abideth Olaf quiet all winter; but in spring, when it wore to an end, the king and Olaf come to 'speech together : Olaf begs leave of the king to fare out to Iceland come summer. There have I, quoth he, renowned kin to wot of. Answereth the king: This would be most to my mind, that thou shouldst be stablished with us and take here all such office as thou wilt thyself. Olaf thanketh the king for this honour that he bade him, yet said that he would fain fare to Iceland if it were not against the king's will. Then answereth the king: This shall make no unfriendship betwixt thee and me, Olaf; thou shalt fare in summer out to Iceland, since I see that thy heart is much set thereon; but thou shalt have no business or toil about thy plenishing; I shall see to it. Hereafter they sunder speech. Harald the king lets launch a ship that spring; she was a dromond; that ship was right mickle and good; that ship lets the king lade with timber and be arrayed with all her rigging; and when the ship was boun, the king lets call Olaf to him and spake : This ship, Olaf, shall be thine own : I will not that thou sail from Norway this summer in such wise that thou art another man's faring-guest. Olaf thanked the king with fair words for his greathearted-ness. Thereafter Olaf makes him ready for his journey; and when he is boun and the wind fair, then saileth Olaf to sea, and Harald the king parteth from him with all the love that might be. Olaf had a good voyage that summer. He brought his ship into Ramfirth,to Boardere. The coming of the ship was soon told of, and this likewise, who was the master of her. Hoskuld heareth of the homecoming of Olaf his son, and is exceeding fain thereof, and rideth north to Ramfirth straightway with some men; fair is the meeting there betwixt son and father: Hoskuld bade Olaf abide with him, and he said that he would so do. Olaf layeth up his ship, but his goods are flitted south. But when this is redd up, Olaf rides south with eleven men, and so home to Hoskuld-stead. Hoskuld greeteth his son blithely. His brethren also receive him with blitheness, and all his kinsmen; yet was there most friendship betwixt him and Bard. Olaf waxed famous by this journey. Then too was it made known of what kindred Olaf was, that he was daughter's son to Myrkjartan king of the Irish. This was told all over the land, and therewith the worship that mighty men had laid on him, those to whom he had sought. Olaf had much wealth with him, and abideth now all that winter with his father. Melkorka soon came to meet Olaf her son. Olaf greeted her with all blitheness. She asketh much and many things of Ireland; first of her father and her other kindred. Olaf telleth * her such things as she asketh of him. Soon asked she if her fostermother lived. Olaf said that of a surety she lived. Then asks Melkorka why he would not do her this kindness, to flit her to Iceland. Then answers Olaf: Men wished not, mother, that I should flit thy foster-mother from Ireland. It may be so, quoth she. It was seen that this was sore misliked of her. Melkorka and Thorbiorn had one son, and he is named Lambi: he was a mickle man and stark, and like to his father in looks and likewise in temper. But when Olaf had been the winter in Iceland, and spring came, then the father and son take rede concerning what he should do. This would I, Olaf, saith Hoskuld, that a wife be sought for thee, and that thou take over then the dwelling of thy fosterer at Goddisteads; mickle store of wealth is yet there; afterward shalt thou see to the upholding of that stead with my help. Olaf answereth: Little heart have I thereto as yet; I know not where sitteth that woman, of whom I may look to win mickle good hap; thou mayst be assured that I shall look high in taking a wife; but this too wot I clearly, that thou wouldst not have brought forward this matter save thou hadst taken thought of what the issue should be. Hoskuld spake: Rightly doest thou guess. There is a man hight Egil. He is the son of Bald-Grim. He dwelleth at Burg in Burgfirth. Egil hath a daughter hight Thorgerd ; for this woman I am minded to bid on thy behalf; because she is the alderbest choice in all Burgfirth and it may be yet further afield; this too is like to be, that affinity with the Miremen will work for thy gain. Olaf answers: I will abide by thy

foresight herein, and this match is wholly to my mind, if it may be brought about: but so mayst thou deem of it, that if this suit is put forth and may not be brought about, it will like me ill. Quoth Hoskuld: We must see to it that this suit is carried through. Olaf bids him rule herein.. Now wears the time to the Thing. Hoskuld makes him ready now to fare from home, with a very great company. Olaf his son is afaring with him. They tilt in their booth. Much people was there. Egil, Bald-Grim’s son, was at the Thing. All men who saw Olaf spake of him, how joyous he was and like to a ruler of men. He was well dight with weapons and raiment.

Chapter 23

It is told that one day that father and son, Hoskuld and Olaf, went from the booth to meet with Egil. Egil greeteth them well, for Hoskuld and he were well acquainted. Now Hoskuld begins the wooing for Olaf and biddeth for Thorgerd. She was likewise there at the Thing. Egil took to this suit well: he had, said he, a good report of both father and son. This too wot I, Hoskuld, quoth Egil, that thou art a man of high lineage and mickle worth; but Olaf is famed by reason of his journey; and it is nought strange, that such a man should aim high, since he lacketh nought either in his kin or the fairness of his body; but the answer to the suit shall rest with Thorgerd herself, for no man shall so prevail as to get Thorgerd to wife against her will Spake Hoskuld: This will I, Egil, that thou take rede hereof with thy daughter. Egil said that so should it be. Now went Egil to meet his daughter, and they fell to speech together. Then spake Egil: There is a man hight Olaf: he is the son of Hoskuld, and he is now the most famed man of any there be. Hoskuld his father is come awooing on behalf of Olaf, and hath bidden for thee. I have thrust it off wholly upon thy judgment: now will I wot of thine answer: but to us it seems so, that it will be most meet to give good answer to such a suit, inasmuch as the match is a right seemly one. Thorgerd answereth : I have heard thee say that thou lovest me the best of thy children : yet now I deem thee untrue therein, if thou wilt wed me to the son of a handmaid, though he be a fair man and a mickle man for show. Egil saith: Nought art thou so well learned in this as in other things : hast thou not heard that he is the daughter’s son of Myrkjartan king of the Irish? He is far better born by his mother’s side than his father’s; and yet that would be fully welcome to us. Thorgerd said that she could not bring herself to it. Now they sunder speech, and each hath a deeming of his own way. The next day Egil goeth to the booth of Hoskuld, and Hoskuld greeteth him well. Now they fall to speech together. Hoskuld asks how the matter of the wooing has sped. Egil made small cheer thereover; he telleth all as it had past. Hoskuld said that it looked a hard case; and yet I deem thou hast done well by us. Olaf was not by when they spake together. After this Egil departs. Olaf would know now what is come of the wooing. Hoskuld said that it looked to be somewhat backward on her part. Spake Olaf: Now is it as I told thee, father, that it would like me ill if I gat so disdainful a word for my pains: thou hadst thy way the rather when this suit was first brought up ; now shall I so rule that it shall not fall to the ground thus: moreover it is sooth as the saying hath it, that wolves eat another’s message. Hoskuld bade him do as he would. Olaf was arrayed in such wise, that he was clad in the scarlet which King Harald had given to him. He had on his head a helm of red gold, and the fair inwrought sword in his hand that Myrkjartan the king had given to him. Now go Hoskuld and Olaf to the booth of Egil; Hoskuld goeth afore, but Olaf close behind him. Egil greets them well, and Hoskuld sitteth down by him; but Olaf stood up and looked around. He saw where sat a woman on the dais in the booth. That woman was fair and masterful of bearing and well arrayed: he deemed he knew that she must be Thorgerd Egil’s-daughter. Olaf goeth to the dais and setteth him down by her. Thorgerd hails the man and asks who he is. Olaf saith his name and his father: Thou wilt deem it an overbold deed that the son of a handmaid should dare to sit by thee and be minded to speak with thee. Thorgerd answers : Thus wilt thou be thinking, that thou must deem thou hast done more deeds of daring than to talk with women. Then they fall to speech betwixt them ; and they talk all that day. Other men hear nought of their talk, and before they sunder speech are Egil and Hoskuld brought in to it. Then is the wooing of Olaf taken up anew. Thorgerd yieldeth to the rede of her father. Then is this thing agreed

on, and the plighting of troth went forward straightway. Then was the repute of the Laxdalers increased, inasmuch as the woman should fare over to them. The bridal gathering was appointed at Hoskuldsteads seven weeks before the end of summer. After this Egil and Hoskuld part; and that father and son ride home to Hoskuldstead, and abide at home that summer, and all is quiet. Then were folk summoned to the feast at Hoskuldsteads, and nought was spared thereat, for there was abundance of store. The guests come at the time appointed. The Burgfirthers were a very great company. Egil was there, and Thorstein his son. There too was the bride afaring and a chosen host out of the countryside. Hoskuld likewise had a great company. The feast was right glorious: men were sped thence with gifts. Then Olaf gave to Egil the sword Myrkjartan's-loom, and Egil was right well pleased with the gift. All was tidingless there, and men fare homeward.

Chapter 24

Olaf and Thorgerd abode at Hoskuldsteads, and mickle love grew betwixt them there. Clearly was it seen of all men that she was much stout-hearted, yet few-dealing in everyday matters; but that thing ever came to pass which Thorgerd willed, and even in such wise as she chose it to be. Olaf and Thorgerd were all that winter either at Hoskuldsteads or with his foster-father. In the spring Olaf took over the dwelling at Goddisteads. That same summer Thord Goddi fell sick, and that sickness brought him to his bane. Olaf let heap a howe over him on the ness that runneth out into Lax-water and hight Sprayness. Thereby is a garth, and it hight Howegarth. Men drift then to Olaf and he waxeth a mickle chieftain. Hoskuld took this not amiss, because he would ever that Olaf should be called upon in all causes of weight. That was the stead of most mark in Laxwaterdale the which Olaf owned. There were two brethren with Olaf; either of the twain hight An: the one was called An the White, and the other An the Black: Beinir the Stark was yet a third. These were smiths to Olaf, and all stout men. Thorgerd and Olaf had a daughter who hight Thurid. Those lands that Hrapp had owned lay waste, as is afore writ. Olaf deemed they lay well for him: he spake to his father one time, that they should send men to Welt with this message, that Olaf will buy of him the land of Hrappsteads and the other rights that follow therewith. That was agreed on, and this bargain was struck, because Welt saw that a bird in the hand was better to him than two in the bush. This was the bargain betwixt them: that Olaf should pay three marks of silver for the land. But it was no even bargain, for they were wide lands and fair, and much might be won therefrom. Mickle salmon fishings and seal fishings followed therewith. There was also mickle woodland on the north side of Laxwater somewhat higher up than Hoskuldsteads. There was a clearing hewn in the wood; and it was nigh at hand, so that the cattle of Olaf would gather together there let the weather be better or worse. Now it came to pass one harvest that in that same holt let Olaf raise a stead of timber hewn in that wood, but some he had from drift-strands. This stead was a fair and great one. The houses were empty that winter. The next spring Olaf shifted thither his household, and let first drive together all his cattle, and that was a very great flock, for no man in Broadfirth was then wealthier of live stock. Now Olaf sendeth word to his father that he stand outside and see his faring whenas he fared to this new dwelling, and have a word of hale therefor. Hoskuld said that so it should be. Now Olaf maketh ready; he lets drive out first the sheep, that were the most shy ; next to them fared the farm cattle. Then were driven the barren neat; last of all fared the packhorses. Men were so placed about these cattle that none should swerve aside. The head of the train was by then come to the new abode, when Olaf rode out of the garth at Goddistead, and there was no break in between. Hoskuld stood outside with his homemen. Then spake Hoskuld, that Olaf his son should be come well and betimes to his new lairstead; and it is nigh to my foreboding that this shall follow, that his name will long endure. Saith Jorun the housewife : The handmaid's son hath wealth enow that his name should endure. It was even at the same time as the housecarles had unladen the horses of their packs, when Olaf rode into the garth. Then he took up the word: Now shall be the longing of men fulfilled of that which hath ever been in their mouths all winter, to know how this stead shall be named : it shall be named Herdholt. This men deemed to be well thought of because of those

doings that had betid there. Now Olaf setteth up house at Herdholt; soon was it a fair and great one; no lack of aught was there; now waxed much the repute of Olaf; many things led hereto; Olaf was the best-beloved of men because when he gave judgment in any cause of men all were well content with their lot. His father strove much for the increase of his worship. Olaf was likewise mickle strengthened by his alliance with the Miremen. Olaf was deemed the greatest man among the sons of Hoskuld. That winter when Olaf first abode at Herdholt, he had many servingmen and hired hands; the work was parted among the house-carles ; one had the care of the barren neat, another of the kine. The byre was out in the wood, not very near to the stead. One evening there came to Olaf the man who had the care of the barren neat, and bade him find another man to see to the neat: but I am minded for other work. Olaf answereth : I will that thou keep to this same work of thine. He said that he would liefer depart; Then thou deemest that somewhat is amiss, quoth Olaf: now shall I fare with thee this evening when thou bindest up the neat; and if I deem thou hast some warrant for this, then will I count it not against thee: else shalt thou find thy lot worsened in some wise. Olaf taketh in his hand the gold-dight spear, the king’s-loom, goeth now from the homestead, and the housecarle with him; there lay some snow on the ground; they came to the byre, and it was open. Olaf saith that the housecarle shall go in: but I shall drive the neat up to thee and do thou then bind them. The housecarle goeth to the byre door. Olaf knoweth nought ere the carle flings into his arms. Olaf asks why he fareth so fearfully. He answers: Hrapp standeth in the byre door and would grope at me, but I have my fill of trying a fall with him. Then goeth Olaf to the door and driveth at him with the spear. Hrapp seizeth the spearhead with both hands by the socket, and bendeth it out, so that the shaft is broken straightway. Then will Olaf run at Hrapp ; but Hrapp sank into the earth there even as he was come. So then they sunder, that Olaf had the shaft and Hrapp the spearhead. Thereafter Olaf and his fellow bind up the neat, and then go their ways home. Now Olaf said to the housecarle that he held him sackless of this plaint of his. The next morning Olaf fared to the place where Hrapp had been put away, and let dig there: Hrapp was even then unrotted. There Olaf findeth his spearhead. Then he lets build a bale: Hrapp is burned on the bale, and his ashes are flitted out to sea. Henceforth cometh hurt to no man from the hauntings of Hrapp.

Chapter 25

Now is it to be told of the sons of Hoskuld. Thorleik Hoskuldson had been a mickle faringman, and was with highborn men when he was on cheaping journeys, before he set up house, and was deemed a man of mark: he had likewise been in wicking-work, and gat there good renown for his valour’s sake. Bard Hoskuldson had also been a faringman, and was well looked on wheresoever he came, in that he was the best of brave fellows, and a courteous man in all wise. Bard married a wife, and took a woman of Broadfirth, Astrid by name; she was of good kin. The son of Bard was Thorarin, but his daughter was Gudny, who was wedded to Hall, son of Slaying-Stir: and of them are come mickle kindred. Now Hrut Herjolfson gave freedom to a thrall of his hight Hrolf, and therewith some live stock and a homestead on the boundary between him and Hoskuld : and it lay so near to the landmark that the Hrutlings had overshot the mark, and had set down their freedman upon the lands of Hoskuld. He soon gained there mickle wealth. Hoskuld deemeth it much to his hurt that Hrut had set his freedman down under his nose; he bade the freedman pay him for the ground whereon he dwelt: For it is mine. The freedman fareth to Hrut and telleth him all the tale. Hrut bade him give no heed and pay nought to Hoskuld; I know not, quoth he, to which of us this land belongeth. Now fareth the freedman home, and abideth in his dwelling even as before. A little after fareth Thorleik Hoskuldson by the rede of his father to the stead of the freedman; they take and slay him; but Thorleik took to himself and his father all the wealth which the freedman had gained. This learned Hrut, and ill it liked him and his sons. They were many and full-grown men, and that company of kinsfolk was deemed hard to strive with. Hrut searched out the law in this matter, and this matter was ransacked by the lawmen; it went little to Hrut’s mind; men made much of it that Hrut had set down his freedman on Hoskuld’s ground without leave asked, and he had gained wealth there: Thorleik had slain him on his father’s own land. Hrut was

ill content with his lot, and yet abode as he was. After this Thorleik let build a homestead on the boundary betwixt Hrut and Hoskuld; and it hight Combness. There dwelt Thorleik awhile, as is aforesaid. Thorleik gat a son by his wife. The lad was sprinkled with water and called Bolli. He was speedily an exceeding comely man.

Chapter 26

Hoskuld Koll-a-dales' son fell sick in his old age; he sendeth for his sons and other kinsfolk. And when they were come, Hoskuld spake to the brethren Bard and Thorleik: I have some disease upon me: I have ever been a man free of sickness: I deem that this sickness will bring me to my bane ; now it is so, as is well known to you, that ye are both men lawfully begotten, and have the right to take all the heritage after me; but there is yet that third son of mine who was born out of wedlock. Now I will of you twain brethren that Olaf be brought into the inheritance and take his third share along with you. Bard answereth first, and saith that he shall do this according to his father's will ; for I look to increase of renown of Olaf in all wise, and that the rather as he is the richer in fee. Then spake Thorleik : Far is it from my will that Olaf be made joint heir with us: Olaf hath wealth enough already; thou, father, hast given him far more than his I IIdue, and hast long dealt unfairly by us brethren : I will not of my freewill give up this right, to the which I was born. Spake Hoskuld: Thou shalt not will to rob me of that which the law grants, that I give twelve;ounces to my son, of such high lineage by his mother's kin as is Olaf? Thorleik yeasaith this. Then let Hoskuldtake the ring Hakon's-loom (it weighed a mark) and the sword the king's-loom, whereto came half a mark of gold, and gave them to Olaf his son, and therewith his own good-hap and that of his kindred: he said that he spake not so as not knowing that she had already taken her place with him. Olaf taketh the jewels, and said that he would run the risk of how it liked Thorleik. He was ill pleased with this, and deemed that Hoskuld had been underhand with him. Olaf answers: I may not let the jewels go, Thorleik; because thou didst grant suchlike fee-gifts, and that before witnesses; I must run the risk of keeping hold on it. Bard said he would abide by the rede of his father. After this died Hoskuld: this was deemed mickle scathe, first and foremost by his sons, and by all their kinsfolk and friends. His sons let build a great howe over him. Little wealth was borne to howe with him. And when that was ended, then those brethren fall to speech concerning this, that they will give a wake for their father; for such was the custom at that time. Then spake Olaf: Thus it seems to me, that we may not be ready for this feast so speedily, if it is to be so great an one as beseemeth us ; now is harvest much worn, and it is nought easy to gather victual; most men moreover will deem it a hard matter of those who must seek to us from afar, and it is most like that many will come not of those whom we most wish to come. Now I shall undertake next summer at the Thing to bid men to this feast: and I will lay down one third of the cost thereof. Those brethren yeasaid this; but Olaf now fareth home. Thorleik and Bard share the goods between them ; to Bard falleth the land-heritage, since most men wished for this, inasmuch as he was a man beloved. To Thorleik fell rather the loose-fee. It was well and blithe betwixt Olaf and his brother Bard, but somewhat unfriendly betwixt Olaf and Thorleik. So wears now the next winter, and comes the summer ; and it wears to the Thing. Those sons of Hoskuld now make them ready for the Thing. Soon was it well seen of all men that Olaf would be by far the leader of those brethren. And when they came to the Thing, they tilt in their booths, and abode there in good and bounteous wise.

Chapter 27

It is told of one day, when men go to the Lawhill, that Olaf then standeth up and first telleth men of the loss of his father: Now are there many men here, his kinsmen and friends. This is now the will of my brethren, that I bid you to a wake for Hoskuld our father; all men that have priesthoods, for they will be mostly the greater men, who are bound to him by ties of alliance; I shall also make it known that none shall fare thence giftless of the higher sort. Therewith will I bid the bonders and whoso will

yeasay it, even the poor and needy; they shall abide for a half-month’s feast at Hoskuldstead, when it lacks ten weeks of winter. And when Olaf ended his tale there was good rumour made, and this message was deemed a mighty brave one. And when Olaf came back to the booth he told his brethren of his purpose. They were not over well pleased, and deemed that too much had been undertaken. After the Thing ride those brethren home. Now wears the summer. Those brethren make ready for the feast. Olaf layeth down his third share ungrudgingly, and the feast is boun with the best of victual. Mickle store was made for this feast, because it was looked for that a great company should come. And when the time of the feast cometh, it is told that there come most of the worshipful men that had pledged themselves thereto. So mickle a company was this, that it is the tale of most men that it fell not short of nine hundreds. This hath been one of the two most thronged feasts held in Iceland; but the other was that which the sons of Hjalti made for a wake for their father: thereto came twelve hundreds of men. This feast was most bravely dight in all wise, and those brethren gat mickle renown, but Olaf was much the foremost. Olaf shared alike with both his brethren in the giving of gifts ; to all the men of worship was given. And when most men had fared away thence, Olaf fell to speech with Thorleik his brother and spake : So is it, kinsman, as thou well wottest, that there hath been but little love lost betwixt us : now would I fain speak to this end, that we better our kinship henceforward. I know that it mislikes thee that I took those jewels that my father gave to me upon his dying day; now if thou deemest thyself slighted herein, then will I so strive for the easement of thy heart that I will foster thy son ; and he is ever called the lesser man who fostereth other men’s children. Thorleik taketh this well and sayeth, as is sooth, that this is seemly bidden. Now Olaf taketh to him Bolli the son of Thorleik. He was then of three winters. Now sunder they with the most friendship, and Bolli fareth home to Herdholt with Olaf. Thorgerd taketh well to him; there is Bolli reared up, and they love him no less than their own children.

Chapter 28

Olaf and Thorgerd had a son. That lad was sprinkled with water and a name was given him. Olaf let call him Kjartan after Myrkjartan his mother’s father. Bolli and Kjartan were wellnigh of an age. Yet more children had they. Their sons hight Steinthor and Halter, Helgi, and Hoskuld was the youngest son of Olaf. Bergthora hight a daughter of Olaf and Thorgerd, and Thorbjorg was another. All their children were goodly of body when they waxed up. At that time abode Holmgang-Bersi in Sourly, at the stead which hight Tongue. He fareth unto Olaf and bade for Halter his son to foster. That yeasaith Olaf, and Halter fareth back with him ; he was then one winter old. That summer Bersi falleth sick and lies abed great part of the summer. It is told that one day men were at the haysel at Tongue, but those twain, Halter and Bersi, within doors. Halter lay in his cradle ; then the cradle falleth over from under the lad, and he out of the cradle on to the floor. Bersi might not fare to his help. Then quoth Bersi this stave:

Here in piteous plight
Are the twain of us ;Halter and IHelplessly we lie ;Eld weighs on meout youth on thee:Mendeth this for thee,Waxeth worse for me.

Then come men, and take Halter up from the floor; but Bersi mendeth. Halter was reared there and grew a mickle man and a doughty. Kjartan Olafson waxed up at home, at Herdholt. He was the fairest of all men that have been bred in Iceland. He was mickle of feature, and well-made of his face, the best eyed of men and light of hue: much hair had he, and that fine as silk, and it fell down in locks : a mickle man and stark even as had been Egil his mother’s father, or Thorolf. Kjartan was better fashioned than any man, so that all wondered who looked on him ; he was likewise a better fighting-man than most others ; well skilled was he, and the best of swimmers; in all feats of strength he far outwent other men ; to all men was he meek of speech and friendly, so that every bairn loved

him ; he was merry of mood and openhanded of his wealth. Olaf loved Kjartan best of all his children. Bolli his foster-brother was a mickle man ; he came next after Kjartan in all feats and skill ; stark was he and fair of face ; bounteous and yet most warriorlike, a very showy man. Those foster-brethren much loved one another. Now abideth Olaf at his homestead for the space of winters not right few.

Chapter 29

Now it is told of that one spring Olaf made it known to Thorgerd that he was minded to go a journey: I will that thou take the charge of our homestead and bairns. Thorgerd said she had little will thereto, but Olaf said that it must be so. He buyeth a ship that was lying up at The Shallows. Olaf fared in that summer, and cometh with his ship to Hordaland. There a little way inland dwelt a man who hight Gourmand Noise, a mighty man and a well to do, and a mickle wicking; a man ill to deal with was he, and had now set him down in peace, and was of the guard of Hakon the Earl, the Mighty. Gourmand fareth to the ship, and soon comes to know Olaf, because he had heard him spoken of. Gourmand biddeth Olaf to him, with as many men as he would. That yeasaith Olaf, and fareth to the guesting with five men. Olaf’s shipmates were guested there about Hordaland. Gourmand maketh Olaf good cheer. The homestead there was right great and many men were there. Much glee was there all winter. But when the winter was worn, Olaf openeth his errand to Geirmund, to wit, that he will win him store of housetimber; much weight he laid on it, said he, that he gain good choice thereof. Geirmund answers: Hakon the earl hath the best forests, and I know of a surety that if thou go to meet him thou wilt get all thy desire, because the earl giveth good greeting to those men who are not of even manhood with thee, Olaf, if they seek to him. In the spring Olaf maketh ready to fare to meet with Hakon the earl: the earl maketh him welcome with marvellous goodwill, and bade Olaf abide with him so long as he would. Olaf telleth the earl how it stood with his journey: This will I pray of thee, lord, that thou grant us of thine own forests to hew housetimber. The earl answereth : Unstinted shall it be, though thou lade thy ship with the timber that we shall give thee; because we deem that not every day do such men as thou seek to us from Iceland. Now at their sundering the earl gave to Olaf a gold-inwrought axe, and that was the best of jewels. Then they sundered with the most friendship. Geirmund privily riddeth him of his lands, and is minded to go out to Iceland in the summer on Olaf’s ship. He hath hidden this from all men. Olaf knew nought thereof till Geirmund flitted his goods to Olaf’s ship, and that was much riches. Spake Olaf: Thou mightest not fare on my ship, had I known of this before; because I misdoubt me that there will be some in Iceland for whom it had been better that they had never seen thee ; but now that thou art come with so mickle wealth, it beseemeth me not to drive thee back like a sheep-dog. Geirmund saith: I shall not be turned back, for all thou art somewhat big of words; because I am minded to win to be thy faring-fellow. Olaf and his folk go aboard and sail out to sea. They had a good voyage, and made Broadfirth: now they run the gangways aland at Laxwateroyce. Olaf lets bear the timber out of the ship, and setteth up the ship under the roof that his father had let make. Olaf bade Geirmund to guesting with him. That summer let Olaf build a fire-house at Herdholt more and better than any men had afore seen. There were limned wondrous tales on the panel-timbers and likewise on the roof beams. This was so well wrought that men deemed it to be a far braver show when the hangings were not up. Geirmund was few-dealing in everyday matters, a hard man to most folk ; now he was ever so clad that he wore a kirtle of scarlet cloth and a gray cloak over all, a bearskin cap on his head, a sword in his hand; that was a mickle weapon and a good ; ivory-hilted, no silver was borne thereon ; but the brand was sharp, and rust never abode on it. This sword he called Footbiter, and never did he let it go out of his hand. Geirmund had been but a short while there before he set his mind on Thurid Olaf’s daughter, and put forward his wooing to Olaf; but he gave him nay for answer. Then Geirmund maketh trial of Thorgerd with fee, to the end that she should be on his side. She took the fee, since no small sum was laid down ; then Thorgerd put this suit before Olaf. She saith moreover her mind, to wit, that her daughter might not be better mated: because he is a mickle champion, wealthy withal and proud. Then answereth Olaf: This shall not be done against thy will more than

aught else ; yet I were liefer that Thurid were wedded to some other man. Thorgerd goeth forth and deemeth her errand well sped ; now she told Geirmund how it had gone. He thanked her for her help and high-heartedness. Now Geirmund puts forward his wooing to Olaf for the second time, and that was now an easy matter. After that Geirmund betroths him to Thurid, and the wedding shall be at Herdholt at the end of winter. That wedding was much thronged, because as then was the firehall fully wrought. There was at the wedding-feast Ulf Uggison, and he had made a lay upon Olaf Hoskuldson and of those tales that were written up in the firehall, and he brought it to the wedding-feast. This lay is called House-drapa, and is well made. Olaf gave good guerdon for the lay. He gave likewise great gifts to all the great men who had come at his bidding. Olaf was deemed to have waxed by this feast.

Chapter 30

The life together of Geirmund and Thurid went amiss; it was so on both sides. Three winters abode Geirmund with Olaf ere he listed to depart, and he gave out that Thurid should tarry behind, and their daughter also, who hight Groa. That may was then one winter old : but Geirmund will leave no fee behind him. That liketh mother and daughter mighty ill, and they tell of it to Olaf; but Olaf spake then: How is it now, Thor-gerd? Is the Easterner not so proud now as that autumn when he asked for thy daughters hand? They made no way with Olaf, because he was in all things a man of his word : he said too that the may should bide behind till such time as she could fend for herself. But at their sundering Olaf gave Geirmund a merchant-ship with all her gear. Geirmund thanketh him well, and said that it was right greatheartedly given. Then he makes ready the ship, and sails out from Laxwateroyce with a light northeaster ; but the wind fell when they came out to the isles. He lieth out by Oxisle half a month, so that he cannot get him gone. At that time Olaf had to fare from home to see to his drifts. Then calleth Thurid his daughter housecarles to her; she bade them fare with her. She had the may also with her ; ten were they in all. She lets put out the ferry that Olaf had. Thurid bade them sail and row out down Hvammsfirth. And when they come out to the isles, she bade them launch overboard the boat which stood on the ferry. Thurid stept into the boat, and two men with her; but she bade them ward the ship that were left behind until she should come back. She took the may in her bosom and bade row over the stream so far as that they might win to the ship. She caught up an auger out of the stern-locker, and gave it into the hand of one of her faring-fellows; she bade him go to the boat of the merchant-ship and bore it, so that it should be unseaworthy if men should need to take to it swiftly. Then she let flit her aland, and had the may in her bosom; that was at the sun’s uprising. She goeth out along the gangway and so into the ship. All men were asleep. She went to the hammock wherein Geirmund was sleeping. The sword Footbiter hung upon the pin. Thurid now setteth down the may Groa in the hammock, but she caught up Footbiter and took him away with her. Then goeth she from the ship and so to her faring-fellows. Now the may falleth to weeping. Therewith wakes Geirmund, and kens the bairn, and deems that he knows what the cause of this must be. He springeth up and will grip the sword and misses it, as was like ; he goes out to the side and seeth that they row from the ship. Geirmund calleth to his men and bade them leap into the boat and row after them. They do so, but scarce are they come therein, when they mark that the coalblue sea pours in on them; now they turn back to the ship. Then calleth Geirmund to Thurid and bade her turn back and yield him the sword Footbiter; and have thence with thee as much of fee as thou wilt. Saith Thurid: Dost thou deem it better to win the sword than not? Geirmund answers: Mickle other wealth would I give up ere I deemed it better to lose the sword. She spake : Then shalt thou never get it; much unmanly hast thou dealt with us; now shall there be sundering betwixt thee and me. Then spake Geirmund: No luck shall it be to thee to take the sword with thee. She said she would take the risk of that. This weird let I go with it, saith Geirmund, that this sword shall be for the bane of that man of your kin of whom is most scathe and on whom it may most unmanly come. Hereafter fareth Thurid home to Herdholt. Olaf was then likewise come home, and her undertaking somewhat misliked him ; but yet he held his peace. Thurid gave to Bolli her kinsman the sword Footbiter, for she loved him no less than her own brethren;

Bolli bare that sword long after. Now Geirmund and his mates gat a fair wind ; they sail out to sea, and come to Nor way at harvest-tide. They sail one night upon a reef off Stad; Geirmund is lost there and all his shipmates. And here leaves the tale to tell of Geirmund.

Chapter 31

Olaf Hoskuldson sat in his homestead in mickle worship, as is aforewrit. Gudmund hight a man, the son of Solmund, who dwelt at Asbiornsness north-away in Willowdale. Gudmund was a wealthy man: he asked for Thurid,and gat her with mickle fee. Thurid was a wise woman and proud withal, and very stately. Hall hight their son, and Bardi, Stein and Steingrim. Gudrun hight their daughter, and Olof. Thorbjorg the daughter of Olaf was the fairest of women and bigly made; she was called Thorbjorg the Thick, and was wedded west in Waterfirth to Asgeir son of Knott. He was a worthy man. Their son was Kjartan, the father of Thorvald, the father of Thord, the father of Snorri, the father of Thorvald. Thence is come the Waterfirthers' kin. Afterwards Thorbjorg was wedded to Vermund Thorgrimson; their daughter was Thorfinna, whom Thorstein Kuggi-son wedded. Bergthora Olaf's daughter was married west in Deepfirth to Thorhall the priest. Their son was Kjartan the father of Smith-Sturla. He was the fosterer to Thord Gilson. Olaf Peacock had much treasure in livestock. He had a good ox, who hight Harri, applegray of hue, greater than other neat. He had four horns; two were mickle and stood out fairly; the third stood up aloft, the fourth stood out of his brow and fell down before his eyes; that was his ice-breaker; he pawed like a horse. One mickle hard winter he went out of Herdg holt and thither whereas now hight Harristeads in Broad-firthdale; there went he all winter with sixteen neat, and won to grass for them all; in spring he went home to the pasture which hight Harrilair, on the Herdholt land. When Harri was eighteen winters old, then fell his icebreaker from his head, and that same autumn Olaf let hew him. The next night after dreamed Olaf that a quean came to him; she was mickle and wroth. She took up the word: Sleepest thou? He said that he was awake. Spake the quean: Thou sleepest, and yet thou mayst hear for all that; my son hast thou let slay and come to me in piteous wise; and for that guilt shalt thou endure to see thy son all bloody by my contriving, and that one shall I choose thereto whom I know to be thy best beloved. Then she turned away. Olaf awoke and deemed that he saw the wraith of the quean. Olaf deemed the dream of much import and telleth it to his friends, but none read it as it liked him. He deemed that those spake best who said thus, that it was a lying dream that had come to him.

Chapter 32

Osvif hight a man, and he was the son of Helgi the son of Ottar, the son of Bjorn the Easterner, the son of Ketil Flatneb,the son of Bjorn Roughfoot. The mother of Osvif hight Nidbjorg: her mother was Kadlin, the daughter of Gang-Rolf, the son of Ox-Thorir; he was a famous hersir east in Wick; he was so called for this cause, that he owned three isles and eight tens of oxen on each of them. He gave one isle and the oxen thereon to Hakon the king, and that gift was much noised abroad. Osvif was a mickle wise man; he dwelt at Bathstead in Saelings dale. The house at Bathstead standeth on the north side of Saelingsdale-water,over against Tongue. His wife hight Thordis, the daughter of Thjodolf the Low. Ospak hight a son of theirs; the second was Helgi, Vandrad the third, the fourth Torrad, the fifth Thorolf. All of them were sturdy men. Gudrun hight their daughter; she was the fairest of women that have waxed up in Iceland, both for her beauty and her wits. Gudrun was so stately a quean, that at this time it was deemed but bairns'-toys, whatso other queans bore of finery beside her. Of all women was she the most skilful, and best spoken; she was a bounteous quean. That quean was lodged with Osvif who hight Thorhalla and was called Wordy ; she was somewhat akin to Osvif. Two sons had she, the one Odd, the other Stein; they were stout men and were mostly breakers of stones for the homestead of Osvif. Wordy were they as their mother, men unbefriended; yet had they much hold on the sons of Osvif. At Tongue dwelt the man hight Thorarin, the son of Thorir Saeling; he was a good bonder.

Thorarin was a mickle man and stark; he owned good lands, but had less of loose fee. Osvif would buy land of him, inasmuch as he had dearth of land but great plenty of cattle. Thus it came to pass, that Osvif bought of Thorarin all his land from Gnupa-scarth and down the dale on either side to Stackgill; that was good land and choice. He had there a right of pasture. Ever had he store of housecarles; their household was of the most worshipful. West in Saurby a stead hight Knoll; there dwelt three kinsmen. Thorkel Whelp and Knut were brethren and men of high lineage. Their sister's husband owned the stead along with them; he hight Thord. He was known by his mother's name and called Ingunson. The father of Thord was Glum Geiri-son. Thord was a fair man and a deft, well skilled of his hands, and a man much given to strife. Thord had to wife the sister of Thorkel and Knut; she hight Aud; she was no fair quean nor valiant. Thord loved her little; he had mostly taken her for her goods' sake, because mickle wealth was there gathered together. Good was their household after Thord came to rule it with them.

Chapter 33

Guest Oddleifson dwelt westaway in Bard-dale, at Hedge. He was a mickle chieftain and wise of wit, foreseeing in many things, well befriended of all the mighty men, and many put faith in him. He rode every summer to the Thing, and ever had guesting at Knoll. He made ready early in the morning, because the way was long; he was minded for Thickshaw that even, to Armod his brother-in-law: he had to wife Thorun the sister to Guest; their sons were these, Ornolf and Halldor. Now Guest rideth eastward all day from Saurby and cometh to the Baths of Saelingsdale, and abides there awhile. Gudrun came to the Baths and greeteth well Guest her kinsman. Guest took her greeting well, and they fall to speech together, for both of them were wise and many-spoken. But as the day wears, spake Gudrun: That would I, kinsman, that thou ride to us this even with all thy company; that too is the will of my father, though he laid on me such worship as to bear thee this message; and this therewith, that thou shouldst guest here at all times when thou ridest westward or eastward. Guest took this well, and said that it was a gracious message; and yet, said he, he must ride on as he had appointed. Gudrun spake: Much have I dreamed in the winter; but four are the dreams that are of most weight with me; but no man has read them as it liketh me, and yet I ask not that they be read to my will. Then spake Guest: Tell thou thy dreams; maybe we may make somewhat thereof. Gudrun saith: Methought I was standing without by a streamside, and I had a twisted coif on my head, and I deemed it beseemed me ill, and I was eager to alter the coif, but many warned me that I should not do so. But I heeded them nought and griped at the coif so that it came from my head, and I cast it out into the stream. And this dream is no longer. And again spake Gudrun: This was the beginning of the second dream, that methought I stood by a certain water; so I deemed, that I bore a silver ring upon my arm, and methought it was mine own and beseemed me right well. I deemed that a full mickle treasure, and I was minded to keep it long, but whenas I least looked for it the ring slipt from my arm, and so into the water, and I saw it never again. I deemed that a far greater scathe than it was like I should feel though I had tined a jewel. Then woke I. Guest answered only thus: No lesser is that dream. Again spake Gudrun: This is the third dream of mine; that methought I had a gold ring on my arm, and methought the ring was mine own, and I deemed the scathe bettered; it came into my heart that I should keep this ring longer than the first; but I deemed that jewel not so much more seemly as gold is better than silver. Then methought I fell, and would steady myself with mine arm, but the gold ring lighted on a stone and brake in two pieces,and I deemed blood flowed from the pieces. I deemed it liker grief than scathe which methought I felt therefor;it came into my heart that there had been a fault in the ring, and when I gave heed to the shards, then methought I saw more cracks therein; and yet methought it might have yet been whole, if I had better looked to it. And this dream was no longer. Then said Guest: Thy dreams fare not a-waning. And yet again spake Gudrun : This was the fourth dream of mine, that I deemed I had a helm on my head; of gold it was, and set full of stones of price; methought I had there a treasure: and yet most I deemed thereof that it was over heavy for me;because I might hardly come

to wield it, and I bare my head askew; and yet I laid no wite upon the helmtherefor, and had no mind to rid myself of him, but yet he dropt off my head and out into Hvammsfirth, and after that awoke I. Now are all the dreams told thee. Guest answers: Plainly may I see what these dreams mean, but much of a likeness wilt thou deem them,because I must needs read them all in wellnigh one way:Four husbands shalt thou have, and it seems like to me that thou art so given to the first one that goodwill of thine will there be none in the match. Whereas thou deemedst that thou hadst a mickle coif on thy head and that it beseemed thee ill, thou shalt love him little; and whereas thou didst pluck the coif from thy head and castest it into the water, so shalt thou go from him: for men call that cast into the sea, when a man lets go his own and takes nought in its stead. And again spake Guest: This was thy second dream, that thou deemedst thou hadst a silver ring on thine arm; so shalt thou be given to a second man, a man of renown; him shalt thou love much, but enjoy him a short while: it looketh to me not unlike that thou miss him by drowning; and I make that dream no longer. This was the third dream of thine, that thou deemedst thou hadst a gold ring on thine arm. So shalt thou have a third husband. He shall be so much the more worth as that metal is more hard to win and dearer, but it is nigh to my thought that in those days shall be a shift of faith, and that husband of thine shall have taken to that faith which to our mind is far the loftier. But whereas thou didst deem that the ring brake asunder, somewhat by thy lack of watchfulness, and thou sawest blood come from out the pieces, so shall that husband of thine be slain; then mayst thou look to see clearly those faults that have run athwart that marriage. And again spake Guest: This is thy fourth dream, that thou deemedst thou hadst a helm upon thy head, of gold and set with gem-stones, and it grew heavy for thee to bear; so shalt thou have a fourth husband. He shall be a mighty chieftain, and shall hold over thee somewhat the Helm of Awing. And whereas thou didst deem that it sank in Hvammsfirth, so shall he light on that same firth on the last day of his life. Now make I this dream no longer. Gudrun waxed bloodred, while the dreams were a-reading; but no word had she in turn before Guest ended his tale. Then saith Gudrun: Thou mightest have made fairer spae-work of this matter, if it had been so put into thy hand by me; but yet have thou thank for that thou hast read the dreams. But much it forthinketh me, if all this shall come to pass. Then Gudrun bade Guest anew that he should tarry there that day; she said that Osvif had much wisdom to talk of. He answereth: Ride I must as I have appointed; but thou shalt give my greeting to thy father, and tell him this my word : that shorter space shall there be betwixt the abiding-places of us twain, and then may we talk at our ease, if it be granted us then to speak together. Then fared Gudrun home, but Guest rode thence and met a servingman of Olaf's by the homemead-garth. He bade Guest to Herdholt by the wordsending of Olaf. Guest said that he would fain meet with Olaf that day, but he was to guest at Thickshaw. Thereon the housecarle turns homeward, and tells Olaf what is toward. Olaf let take horse, and rode over against Guest with some men. Olaf and Guest met one another down by the sea shore. Olaf greeteth him well and bade him abide with him, and all his company. Guest thanketh him for his bidding, and said that he would ride to the stead and see his house, but he must guest with Armod. Guest tarried little while, and yet saw wide about the homestead and spoke well thereof: no wealth, said he, was spared about that place. Olaf rode with Guest on his way as far as Laxwater. Those foster-brethren had been at the swimming that day. Those sons of Olaf had the most mastery in that sport; many young men from other steads were at the swimming. Then leapt Kjartan and Bolli from their swimming when the company rode up: they were wellnigh clad by then Olaf and Guest came thither. Guest looked on these young men for a time, and showed to Olaf where Kjartan sat and likewise Bolli; and then Guest pointed out with the butt of his spear each one of the sons of Olaf, and named all of them that were there: but many other right hopeful men were there also, and were now come from their swimming, and sat on the river bank by Kjartan and his brethren. Guest said that he did not mark the race-likeness to Olaf in these men. Then spake Olaf: Overgreat tales may not be told of thy much wisdom, Guest, whereas thou kennest men till now unseen of thee: and this will I that thou tell me, which of these young men shall be the man of most worth among them? Answereth Guest: This shall well follow the measure of thy love, for Kjartan shall be deemed of most mark while he lives. Then Guest turned his horse and rode thence; but a little while after rideth Thord the Low his

son up to him, and spake: What now is amiss with thee, my father, that thou sheddest tears? Guest answers: Needless is it to tell this, but I count it nought fitting to hold my peace about that which shall come to pass in thy days: but it will come not unawares to me, though Bolli stand over the body of Kjartan slain, and he win his own bane thereby: and this is an ill thing to wot of men so worshipful. Then ride they to the Thing, and the Thing is quiet.

Chapter 34

Thorvald hight a man, son of Halldor Garps-dale-priest. He dwelt at Garpsdale in Gilsfirth; a well-to-do man and nought hardy. He made suit for Gudrun Osvif's daughter at the Althing when she was fifteen winters old. That suit was not taken amiss, but yet said Osvif that this must be held a drawback, that he and Gudrun were not of even standing. Thorvald spake nought stiffly, and said, he was bidding for a wife and not for goods. Then was Gudrun plighted to Thorvald, and Osvif alone ruled the settlement, and thus it was agreed, that Gudrun should alone have the rule of their goods from the time that they came into one bed together, and should own one half of the whole, whether their wedded life were long or short. She should also buy jewels for her own use such that no woman of like wealth should have better jewels, and yet for all this he should keep up his household. Now ride men home from the Thing. Gudrun was not asked herein, and she bare herself as one somewhat ill-pleased, but yet held her peace. The bridal was at Garpsdale in Twainmonth. Gudrun loved Thorvald little, and was unmeasured in the buying of jewels. No treasures were there so mickle in the Westfirths but Gudrun was eager to own them, and she was wroth with Thorvald if he bought them not, how dear soever they might be reckoned. Thord Ingunson made himself friendly with Thorvald and Gudrun, and abode with them long time, and much rumour arose of the love betwixt Thord and Gudrun. Now it came to pass that Gudrun bade Thorvald buy her jewels. Thorvald said that she knew no bounds, and smote her a blow on the cheek. Then spake Gudrun : Now hast thou given me that which is much thought of by us women, that it liketh us well to have, to wit, a ruddy cheek; and thou hast stayed me from importuning thee more. That same even came Thord thither; Gudrun told him of the dishonour done her and asked how she should pay him for it. Thord smiled and said: Hereto have I good rede. Do thou make him a shirt with a neckhole so great that divorce may be therefor, and give out sundering from him for that cause. Gudrun gainsaid this not, and they sunder speech. That same spring Gudrun gave out her sundering from Thorvald, and tared home to Bathstead. Then was there a sharing of goods betwixt Thorvald and Gudrun, and she had the half of all the goods, and was now waxed greater than aforetime. Two winters had they been together. That same spring Ingun sold her lands in Crook-firth, whereas afterwards hight Ingunstead, and fared west to Cleftness: she had been wedded to Glum Geiri-son, as is aforewrit. At this time dwelt Hallstein the Priest at Hallsteinsness west of Codfirth; he was a mighty man, but not over-well beloved.

Chapter 35

Quotable hight a man; he was but newly come out. Grima hight his wife. Their sons were Hallbjorn Whetstoneseye and Staging. These men were of the South Isles. They were all much learned in spellcraft, and the greatest of wizards. Hallstein the Priest took them to him and set them down at Heaps in Cleftfirth, and their abode was nowise welcome. That summer fared Guest to the Thing, and fared a-shipboard to Saurby as his wont was. He guested at Knoll in Saurby. Those kinsmen-in-law lent them horses, as was their wont aforetime. Thord Ingunson was then a-faring with Guest, and came to Bathstead in Saelingsdale. Gudrun Osvif's daughter rode to the Thing, and Thord Ingunson went along with her. It came to pass one day, that they were riding over Blueshawheath: the weather was fair. Then spake Gudrun : Is it then sooth, Thord, that Aud thy wife weareth breeks with seat-gore, and is wound about with swathe-hose wellnigh down to her shoes? He said that he knew nought of it. Little warrant can there be for it, saith Gudrun, if thou wot it not: but wherefore then is she named

Breeks-Aud? Spake Thord: We trow that but a short time has she been so called. Gudrun answers: It is of the more weight for her that she bear that name for long hereafter. Then came men to the Thing: all was without tidings there. Thord was much in the booth of Guest and was ever speaking with Gudrun. One day Thord Ingunson asked of Gudrun what might be done to a woman if she went in breeks such as those of carles. Gudrun answers: Such doom is meted to a woman for this as in his turn to a carle if he have a neckhole so mickle that his naked paps are seen; to wit, a writ of divorce in either case. Then spake Thord: How rarest thou me, that I give out my sundering from Aud here at the Thing, or in the countryside? And shall I do it with other men's aid, since the men are high-hearted who will belike deem themselves ill-used herein? Gudrun answers awhile after: The loon's suit bides the evening. Then sprang up Thord straightway and went to the Lawhill, and named witnesses for himself. He gives out sundering from Aud, and made it the cause, that she was wont to go in seat-gore breeks like a carle's. This liked the brethren of Aud little, and yet they kept the peace. Thord rides from the Thing with those sons of Osvif. But when Aud learneth these tidings, then spake she: Well is it that I wot this, might I but find the means. Then rode Thord west to Saurby to the sharing of the goods with eleven men, and it went lightly, because Thord recked nought of how the goods were shared. Thord drave much cattle east to Bathstead. Then he put forward his suit for Gudrun. That matter was easily settled for him with Osvif, and Gudrun gainsaid it not. The bridal was to be at Bathstead in the tenth week from the end of summer; that feast was right gloriously dight. Fair was the wedded life of Thord and Gudrun. This alone availed that Thorkel Whelp and Knut pushed not their cause against Thord Ingunson,that they gat no aid thereto. The next summer after, the Knoll-men had their summer quarters in Hvammsdale. Aud was at the fell-cot. The Bathstead men had their quarters in Lambdale; that runneth west into the fells out of Saelingsdale. Aud asketh the man who watched the sheep how oft he met with the shepherd from Bath stead. He said that he was ever meeting with him, as was like to be, seeing that there was one neck only betwixt the two cots. Then spake Aud: Thou shalt go meet the shepherd from Bathstead to-day. So mayst thou tell me whatso of men are at the winter house or at the fell-cot; and speak thou of Thord in right friendly wise, as thou mayst do so. The lad plights himself to do even as she said. But in the evening, when the shepherd came home, Aud asked for the tidings. The shepherd answers: Those tidings have I learned which thou mayst deem good, to wit, that now is the bed-floor broad betwixt the rooms of Thord and Gudrun; since she is at the fell-cot, but he is busied with hall-smithing, and those twain, Osvif and he, are at the winter house. Well hast thou told thy news, saith she; and do thou have saddled two horses when men fare to sleep. The shepherd lad did as she bade, and a little before set of sun Aud mounted, and now was she assuredly in breeks. The shepherd lad rode the other horse and had much ado to keep with her, so fast spurred she on her steed. She rode south over Sailings-dale-heath and did not draw rein till they were close by the homemead-garth at Bathstead. Then she dismounted, and bade the shepherd lad look to the horses while she went into the house. Aud went to the porch, and the door was open: she went into the firehall and to the shut-bed wherein Thord lay asleep. The door was fallen to, but the latch was not fastened. She went into the shut-bed, but Thord was asleep, with his face turned upwards. Then Aud waked Thord; he turned on his side when he saw that a man was come. Then she drew a sax and smote at Thord, and dealt him a mickle wound; it lighted on his right arm, and he was hurt on both nipples; so hard smote she that the sax drave into the mattress. Then Aud went out and to her horse, and leapt on his back, and so rode home afterward. Thord would spring up when he felt the wound, but might not, for he was faint from loss of blood. Therewith woke Osvif, and asks what is toward. But Thord said that he had come by somewhat of a wound. Osvif asks if he knew who had wrought this on him; and he rose up and bound his hurt. Thord said that he trowed it was Aud's doing. Osvif offered to ride after her; she would have come, said he, with but few men, and the wite was to hand for her. Thord said that this should in no wise be: she had, quoth he, done even as she ought to do. Aud came home at sunrise, and her brethren asked her whither she had fared. Aud said that she had fared to Bathstead, and told them what tidings had befallen on her journey. They spoke well thereof, but said that it might well chance to be over little. Thord lay long awounded, and the hurt on his breast healed well, but that arm

was never so good of grip as before. Now was the winter quiet. But the spring after came Ingun the mother of Thord east from Cleftness. He greeted her well. She said that she would fain put herself in the guidance of Thord; she said that Quotable and his sons wrought her hurt by robbery of goods and wizardry, but they had much aid of Hallstein the Priest. Thord took up the matter speedily, and said that he would have right of these thieves though Hallstein were against him; he straightway set him to fare with nine men. Ingun also fared westward with him. He had a ferry out from Titles. Then held they west to Cleftness. Thord let flit to the ship all the loose fee that his mother owned there, but the sheep should be driven in up the firths. Twelve were they in all aboard. Ingun was there, and another woman. Thord came to the stead of Quotable with nine men. The sons of Quotable and his wife were not at home. Then he summoned Quotable and Grima and their sons for theft and wizardry, and let claim outlawry. He laid the case to the Althing, and fared shipward after that. Then came home Hallbjorn and Staging, when Thord had put- out from the land, yet but a little way. They waxed wood wroth hereat, and said that men had not hitherto come to handy blows with them in so mickle enmity. Then let Quotable build a mickle spell-mount; they fared up thither, all of them: there spake they hard-twisted staves; sorcery was that. Straightway burst a mickle storm. Thord Ingunson and his fellows marked it, whereas he was passing out at sea, and knew that the wind was raised against him. The ship driveth westward past Cleftness. Thord showed much valour in seacraft. Those men that were aland saw that he was casting out all things that were heavy save the men: those men that were aland deemed that Thord was like to make the shore, because the worst of the sherries was by then behind them. Then rose a reef but a little way from the land, whereof no man had wotted aforetime, and it smote the ship in such wise that the keel was straightway turned upward. There was Thord drowned, and all his faring-fellows, but the ship was wrecked utterly, and the keel was cast up on the isle that since hight Keel-isle. The shield of Thord was cast up where it is since called Shield-isle: the body of Thord was cast ashore straightway, and those of his fellows in like wise. A howe was raised there over their bodies, where it since hight Showiness.

Chapter 36

These tidings were learned far and wide and were ill spoken of. Those were deemed men not worthy of life who practised such sorceress as Quotable and his kin had used. Gudrun took much amiss the loss of Thord, and she was then gone with child and near her time, Gudrun bare a lad: he was sprinkled with water and called Thord. At this time Snorri the Priest dwelt at Holyfell. He was akin to Olaf, and his friend: Gudrun and Osvif set much store by him. Snorri the Priest fared to them for a homefeast. Then Gudrun showed to Snorri this trouble, but he said that he would look to these matters whenso it seemed good to him, but offered fostering to Gudrun’s child for heartening of her. Gudrun yeasaid this, and said that she would trust in his foresight. This Thord was called Cat: he was father to Stuf the Skald. Then fared Guest Oddleifson to meet with Hallstem the Priest, and set before him choice of two things: that he should drive forth these wizard men, or else he said he should slay them then and there; and that is over-late. Hallstein made choice speedily and bade them the rather begone, and make stay nowhere west of Daleheath; and he said that it were more just were they slain. Then fared Kotkel and his folk thence, and had no other wealth than four studhorses; black was the stallion ; he was both mickle and fair and skilled in fight. Nought is told of their journey before they come to Comoness to Thorleik Hoskuldson. He asks to buy those horses, inasmuch as he saw that they were of great price. Kotkel answers : Thou shalt have thy choice herein : take the horses, and give me a dwelling-place here in thy neighbourhood. Spake Thorleik : Will not the horses be somewhat dear so? for I have learned that ye are most like to give rise to quarrels here in the countryside. Kotkel answers : Herein must thou be speaking the words of the Bathstead men. Thorleik said that it was sooth. Then spake Kotkel: There is another side to our strife with Gudrun and her brethren than that which has been told thee: men have put an ill name on us for no cause : yea, take thou the studhorses, howso it may be ; and such tales only are told of thee, that we shall not be evil intreated by the dwellers hereaway, if we

have thy warding. Now Thorleik wavered in the matter, and he deemed the horses right fair; but Kotkel pleaded his cause cunningly. Then Thorleik took the horses. He gave Kotkel a homestead at Leidolfstead in Laxwaterdale. He furnished them also with farm goods. This comes to the ears of the Bathsteadmen, and the sons of Osvif will fain set upon Kotkel and his sons straightway. Osvif spake: Let us now hold to the rede of Snorri the Priest, and leave this work to others: for but short will be the time ere the neighbours of Kotkel will have span-new causes against them, and it is like that Thorleik will have the worst harm at their hands : many shall be unfriends to him from this time forth of whom he hath hitherto had goodwill; but I will not let you from doing such hurt as liketh you to Kotkel and his folk, if other men come not forward to drive them from the countryside or to take their lives once for all, by then three winters are worn. Gudrun and her brethren said that so it should be. Kotkel and his folk worked little for their living, but they had no need that winter to buy hay or meat, and their abode there was nought beloved. Men durst not meddle with their affairs because of Thorleik.

Chapter 37

It came to pass one summer at the Thing, as Thorleik was sitting in his booth, that a big man came into the booth. He greeted Thorleik, but ne took this man’s greeting, and asked of his name and whence he was. He said that he hight Eldgrim, and dwelt in Burg-firth at the stead which is called Eldgrimstead; now that stead lies in the dale which cleaves the fells westwards betwixt Mull and Grisetongue. It is now called Grims-dale. Saith Thorleik: I have heard tell of thee, that thou art no fainthearted man. Eldgrim spake: This is my errand hither, that I will buy of thee those studhorses, the precious ones, that Kotkel gave thee last summer. Thorleik answers : The horses are not for sale. Eldgrim spake: I offer thee as many studhorses in their stead, and somewhat as makeweight thereto; and many men will say that I offer twice their worth. Spake Thorleik : I am no haggler; inasmuch as these horses gettest thou never, though thou offer thrice their worth. Eldgrim spake : It cannot be gainsaid that thou art stubborn and self-willed: this too would I fain see, that thou get a worser price than I have now offered thee, and lose the horses none the less. Thorleik reddened much at this word, and spake : Needs is it, Eldgrim, that thou come to close quarters if thou wilt deave me out of the horses. Spake Eldgrim : Unlike thou deemest it that thou shouldst come by the worse at my hands: but this summer shall I fare to look on the horses, to whichsoever of us twain it may be given to own them thenceforth. Thorleik saith : Do after thy word ; but offer me not odds of strength. Then they sunder speech. So said men who heard it that the twain were fairly matched in their dealings. Then fared men home from the Thing, and all was without tidings. Now it came to pass one morning early, that a man sat outside Hrutstead, the abode of Hrut Herjolfson; but when he came in Hrut asked him what tidings. He said that he knew no tidings to tell of save that he saw a man ride from beyond by the ford, and thither whereas were Thorleik’s horses : and the man dismounted, and handled the horses. Hrut asked where the horses were then. The housecarle spake : Yet again have they done well for themselves in their pasture, for they were standing even in thy meadow below the garth. Hrut answers: Sooth is it that kinsman Thorleik is ever heedless in his grazing ; and yet I deem it liker that not by his rede are those horses driven hence. Then sprang up Hrut, clad in a shirt and breeks of linen, and cast over him a gray cloak, and had in his hand the gold-inwrought halberd that Harald the king had given him. He goes out somewhat hastily, and saw Eldgrim driving the horses. Hrut hailed him. Eldgrim took his greeting, but somewhat slowly. Hrut asked whither he would drive the horses. Eldgrim answers: I shall not hide it from thee, though I wot of the kinship betwixt thee and Thorleik : but in such wise am I come after the horses, that I am minded that he shall never own them henceforth. I have kept the promise that I made him at the Thing, for I have not fared after the horses with a great company. Hrut saith : No feat is that, though thou take the horses hence while Thorleik lieth abed and asleep : thou wouldst best fulfil the bargain ye made, if thou metst him ere thou ride out of the countryside with the horses. Eldgrim spake : Do thou make Thorleik ware if thou wilt; for thou mayst see that I am come from home in suchlike array that I should deem it well if a meeting might be brought about between me and Thorleik : and he

shook the barbed spear that he bare in his hand. He had also a helm on his head, and was girded with a sword; a shield was at his side ; he was clad in a byrny. Spake Hrut: Rather shall I try something other than to fare to Combness, since I am heavy of foot: but I may not see Thorleik robbed if I have might to let it, though there be little love lost betwixt us kinsmen. Eldgrim spake : Is it not so; that thou art minded to take the horses from me? Hrut answereth : I will give thee other studhorses that thou mayst let these go free, though they be not so good as these. Spake Eldgrim : Most fair is thy tale, Hrut: but inasmuch as I have laid hand on Thorleik's horses, thou shalt never pluck them from me by barter or threats. Then answers Hrut: Methinks thou makest choice of that lot which shall prove the worser for both of us. Now will Eldgrim depart, and lashes his horse: but when Hrut saw that, he hove up the halberd and setteth it betwixt the shoulders of Eldgrim, so that the byrny was straightway slit before it, and the halberd brake out at his breast. Eldgrim fell dead from his horse, as was like to be. Then Hrut hid his body. That place hight Eldgrim's-holt south of Combness. After this rideth Hrut down to Combness and telleth these tidings to Thorleik. He grew very wroth thereat, and he deemed him sore dishonoured by this hap; but Hrut deemed that he had shown him much friendship. Quoth Thorleik, that not only had he done ill by him, but that no good should come of it to himself. Quoth Hrut, that he must do as he pleased in that. They sunder nowise blithely. Hrut was then of eighty winters, when he slew Eldgrim, and was deemed to have waxed mickle by this deed. Thorleik deemed none the better of Hrut in that he was grown mightier by this deed ; he deemed that he wotted plainly that he would have gotten the better of Eldgrim if they had made trial of each other, so little had he withstood Hrut. Now fared Thorleik to his tenants Kotkel and Grima, 'and bade them do somewhat that should be a dishonour to Hrut. They undertook this lightly and said that they were full ready thereto. Then fareth Thorleik home. But a little after they fare from home, Kotkel to wit and Grima, and their sons. That was at night: they fared to the stead of Hrut and there made mickle spells. But when the sound of the spells came to those within, then deemed they that they wist not what was toward; but fair was that chant to hear. Hrut alone knew the sound, and bade no man look out that night; and let each man who may bide awake ; no hurt shall come to us if we fare in such wise. But yet all men slept. Hrut was longest awake, and yet he too slept at last. Kari hight a son of Hrut; he was then twelve winters old, and was the hopefullest of the sons of Hrut. He loved him much. Kari slept wellnigh not at all, because for him was the play made ; he felt not much at his ease. Kari sprang up and looked out; he came within the spell-ring and fell down dead straightway. Hrut awoke in the morning, and his homemen, and missed his son. He was found lifeless a little way from the doors. This Hrut deemed the most scathe, and let pile a howe over Kari. Then he rideth to meet Olaf Hoskuldson, and telleth him those tidings that had come to pass there. Olaf was wood wroth at his tale, and said it had been ill devised, to let set down close by them such evil men as were Kotkel and his folk. He said moreover that Thorleik had dealt himself an evil lot in his doings with Hrut; but yet, quoth he, greater has the loss been than aught he can have wished for. Olaf said that they should straightway slay Kotkel, and his wife and sons; and yet is it over-late now. Olaf and Hrut fare with fifteen men. But when Kotkel's folk see men riding to their stead, they flee up into the fell. There was Hallbjorn Whetstones-eye taken, and a bag drawn over his head : straightway were men told off to ward him, but some set on up into the fells after Kotkel and Grima and Stigandi. Kotkel and Grima were laid hands on upon the Necks betwixt Hawkdale and Laxwaterdale. There were they stoned to death, and that mark is still seen, and it hight War-lock's-cairn. Stigandi bent south from the Necks into Hawkdale, and was there lost to them. Hrut and his sons fared seaward with Hallbjorn. They put out a ship and rowed from land with him ; then took they the bag from off his head, and bound a stone round his neck. Then Hallbjorn cast a glance aland, and the look of his eyes was nought good. Then spake Hallbjorn: No lucky day was it for us when we kinsmen came to Combness here to meet with Thorleik. This weird I lay on it, saith he, that Thorleik shall not win joyous days there henceforth, and that it shall be a heavy burden to all such as are set in his room. This doom is thought to have been fully accomplished. Then they drowned him, and rowed aland. A little after fareth Hrut to see Olaf his kinsman, and telleth him that he will not be on such terms with Thorleik, and bade him furnish him with men to set upon Thorleik. Answers Olaf:

It is not seemly that ye kinsmen should come to blows; this matter has taken an unlucky turn for Thorleik. Rather will we seek to make you at one together: thou hast tarried oft on thy part well and long. Saith Hrut: Nought such may be tried, nor may the breach betwixt us be healed: but this fain would I, that we live not both of us long in Laxwater-dale henceforward. Olaf answers: This shall not be fitting for thee, to go further against Thorleik than I grant leave thereto; but if thou do so, then is it not unlike that dale meet knoll. Now Hrut deems he knows that Olaf may not be moved in this. He fareth homeward, and it likes him exceeding ill. And there is peace, so to say. And men abide at peace for that season.

Chapter 38

Now is it to be told of Stigandi. He became an outlawed man and evil in his dealings. Thord hight a man : he dwelt in Hound-dale: he was wealthy, but no man of might. This new thing came to pass that summer in Hound-dale, that the cows yielded ill: but a woman watched those kine. This marked men, that she waxed wealthy of jewels, and she vanished away long time, so that men knew not where she was. Thord the bonder let force her to tell, and when she was afraid, then she tells how a man comes to meet with her: he is mickle, quoth she, and seemeth to me fair to look upon. Then Thord asks how soon that man should come to meet with her. She said that it was like it would be soon. Hereafter Thord fares to meet Olaf and tells him that Stigandi cannot be far away thence: he bids him fare with his men and take him. Olaf bestirs him quickly and fares to Hound-dale ; then is the handmaid brought to speech with him. Olaf asks where is the lair of Stigandi. She said that she wotted nought of it. Olaf offered to bargain with her if she would deliver up Stigandi therewith ; they make this bargain betwixt them. When day comes she fares to her kine ; then comes Stigandi to meet with her. She greets him well and offers to pick over his head. He lays his head on her knees and is asleep straightway. Then she slipt out from under his head and fares to meet Olaf, and telleth him how things had gone. They fate to Stigandi, and take rede among themselves that he shall not fare as did his brother, that he should look on much that should work them hurt; now take they a bag and draw it over his head. Stigandi awoke, at this, and made no show of fight, inasmuch as there were now many men against him alone. There was a rent in the bag, and Stigandi can see the hillside over against them; the lie of the land was fair and it was well-grassed : but now it was most like as if a whirlwind came and turned up the earth, so that grass never grew thereon more. That place is now called Brent. Then they beat Stigandi to death with stones, and there was he buried. Olaf holds well to his word with the handmaiden, and gave her freedom, and she fared with him to Herdholt. Hallbjorn Whetstoneseye was cast ashore a little while after that he was drowned. The place where he was thrown up hight Roundshipness, and he walked much. That man is named, who hight Thorkel Bald: he abode at Thick-shaw on his father’s heritage : he was a man of mickle courage and of great strength. One evening there lacked a cow at Thickshaw. Thorkel fared to seek her, and his housecarle with him: it was after set of sun, but the moon was up, Thorkel spake, that they should share the search between them ; and when Thorkel was left alone, he deemed that he saw the cow in the holt before him : but when he comes thither, lo it was Whetstones-eye and no cow. They ran at each other full starkly : Hallbjorn gave back, and when Thorkel was least ware of it, he sinks down into the earth from out of his hands, Thereafter fared Thorkel home. The housecarle was by then come home and had found the cow. No hurt came of Hallbjorn thenceforth. Thorbjorn Feeble was then dead, and Melkorka likewise : they lie both of them in howe in Laxwaterdale; but Lambi their son dwelt there after them. He was a mickle champion and had much wealth. Lambi was held of more worth of men than his father for the sake of his mother’s kin :. good was the friendship betwixt him and Olaf. Now wears the winter next after the slaying of Kotkel. The next spring those brethren meet, to wit Olaf and Thorleik. Olaf asked whether Thorleik was minded to abide in his homestead. Thorleik saith that so it was. Spake Olaf : This would I pray of thee, kinsman, that thou break up thy household and fare from the land : thou shalt be deemed a man of valour whithersoever thou comest : but I wot of Hrut our kinsman that he is

no whit pleased with your dealings together : little it liketh me that ye should longer run the risk of abiding so near one to another: Hrut is a man of mickle might, and his sons are overweening men and champions : I should deem it much amiss for our kinship's sake if ye my kinsmen had evil dealings together. Thorleik spake: I grant it not that I may not hold my own against Hrut and his sons, and for that cause I will not fare from the land : but if thou, kinsman, deemest the thing to be of so great avail, and that thou dost abide in mickle thought therefor, then I will do according to thy word ; inasmuch as I ever did best for myself when I was abroad. I wot also that thou wilt do no worse by Bolli my son, though I be nowhere anigh ; and him do I love best of all men. Olaf answers : Good luck have thou of this thing, if thou do after my prayer : I am minded to be to Bolli henceforward even as I have been heretofore, and he shall be held even as one of mine own sons. After this those brethren sunder with mickle blithesomeness. Now Thorleik sells his lands and turns his wealth into goods for his journeying : he buyeth a ship that was lying up at Daymealness. And when he was all-boun, he went a-shipboard, and his wife, and the rest of his housemates. That ship has a good passage, and makes Norway at harvest-tide : thence he fareth south to Denmark, because he found little ease in Norway ; his kinsmen and friends were some dead and some driven from the land. Then Thorleik made his way to Gautland. So is it told by most men, that Thorleik had little ado with old age, but he was held of mickle worth whiles his life yet endured. And so leave we to tell of Thorleik.

Chapter 39

It was ever the talk in the Broadfirthdales at that time of the doings betwixt Hrut and Thorleik, that Hrut had won a heavy lot at the hands of Kotkel and his sons. Spake Osvif to Gudrun and her brethren, and bade them mark if it had been better rede to put themselves in jeopardy from such men of hell as were Kotkel and his folk. Gudrun spake : Nought redeless is he, father, who hath choice of thy redes. Now Olaf abode in his stead with mickle worship, and his sons are there at home, and likewise Bolli their kinsman and fosterbrother. Kjartan was by far the foremost of the sons of Olaf. Kjartan and Bolli loved one another most: Kjartan fared nowhither that Bolli fared not with him. Kjartan fared oft to the Baths of Saelingsdale ; ever it so betid, that Gudrun was at the Baths : Kjartan deemed it good to talk with Gudrun, because she was both wise and deft of speech. It was the saying of all men that Kjartan and Gudrun were most of a match of those men that were then a-waxing. Mickle friendship was there also betwixt Olaf and Osvif, and homebidding ever and again, and none the less because love was growing amongst the younger folk. One time spake Olaf to Kjartan : I wot not, quoth he, how it is ever so little to my liking that thou fare to Bathstead and talk with Gudrun, but it is not because I deem not Gudrun to be far before all other women : nay, she alone of women is such as I deem a fitting mate for thee. Now this is my foreboding, though this spaedom likes me in nowise, that we kinsmen and the Bathstead folk shall not have even good hap at all times in our dealings together. Kjartan said that he would fain do nought against the will of his father if he might do otherwise; but he looked to it, quoth he, that this should take a better turn than Olaf thought for. Kjartan holds to his former wont in his farings ; Bolli fared ever with him. So wear those seasons.

Chapter 40

Asgeir hight a man, and he was called Madpate : he dwelt at Asgeirswater in Willowdale. He was the son of Audun Skokul, who came to Iceland first of his kin: he settled Willowdale. The second son of Audun hight Thorgrim Graypate; he was the father of Asmund the father of Grettir. Asgeir Madpate had five bairns. His son hight Audun, the father of Asgeir, the father of Audun, the father of Egil, who had to wife Ulfheid daughter of Eyolf the Halt; their son was Eyolf, who was slain at the Althing. The second son of Asgeir hight Thorvald. His daughter was Dalla, who was wedded to Isleif the bishop : their son was Gizor the bishop. The third son of Asgeir hight Kalf. All the sons of Asgeir were well-liking men. Kalf Asgeirson was at that time a seafarer, and was deemed a man of the most mark.

The daughter of Asgeir hight Thurid: she was given to Thorkel Kugg son of Thord Yeller: their son was Thorstein. The second daughter of Asgeir hight Hrefna; she was the fairest woman of the north country, and was well befriended. Asgeir was a mighty man of his hands. It is told that on a time Kjartan Olaf-son made him ready to fare south to Burgfirth; nought is told of his journey before he came to Burg. Then dwelt there Thorstein Egilson his mother's brother. Bolli was afaring with him, since such love there was betwixt those fosterbrethren that, neither of them took joy in aught if they twain were not together. Thorstein welcomed Kjartan with all blithesomeness: he could him thank, said he, whether he abode there long time or short. Kjartan tarried at Burg awhile. That summer a ship lay in Steam-water-oyce. Kalf Asgeirson was the owner of that ship. He had been lodging the winter long with Thorstein Egilson. Kjartan saith to Thorstein privily that this was most of all his errand south thither, that he would fain buy of Kalf half the ship; for my heart is set on faring from the land; and he asks Thorstein what he thought of Kalf. Thorstein said he deemed that Kalf was a valiant fellow: That is much to be looked for, kinsman, quoth he, that thou shouldst long to know the ways of other men : thy journey may well be worthy of mark in some fashion. Thy kindred hath much at stake in whatso wise thy faring come to pass. Quoth Kjartan that all should come to pass right well. Then Kjartan buys of Kalf half of the ship, and furnishes an even share of her crew. Kjartan is to come aboard when ten weeks are left of summer. Kjartan was sped from Burg with gifts. Then he and Bolli ride home. But when Olaf learned this change of rede he deemed that Kjartan had taken counsel over hastily, but said that it might not be altered. A little after Kjartan rides to Bathstead, and tells Gudrun of his faring from the land. Gudrun spake: Hastily hast thou taken this rede, Kjartan. She laid thereto some words whereby Kjartan might know that Gudrun was ill pleased hereat. Kjartan spake: Let not this thing mislike thee: I shall do somewhat else so as thou shalt deem well of it. Gudrun spake: Hold thou to that ; for I shall speedily tell thee thereof, Kjartan bade her do so. Spake Gudrun: Then I will fain fare from the land with thee this summer, and so shalt thou make atonement to me for this sudden rede : inasmuch as I love not Iceland. That may not be, said Kjartan; thy brethren are witless and thy father is old; and they will be lacking in all foresight if thou fare abroad from the land; nay, but do thou abide me three winters. Gudrun said that she would not pledge herself thereto, and either of them held to his own way, and so they part. Kjartan rode home. Olaf rode to the Thing that summer. Kjartan rode with his father eastward from Herdholt, and they sundered in Northwaterdale. Thence rode Kjartan shipward, and Bolli his kinsman was faring with him. Ten were those Iceland men in all who were in the journey with Kjartan, and would not part from him for their love's sake. Kjartan rideth to the ship with these faring-fellows. Kalf Asgeirson gives them good welcome. Much goods had Kjartan and Bolli with them. Now they betake them to fitting out the ship, and straightway when the wind blew fair they sail out down Burgfirth before a light wind and good, and so out to sea. They sped well, took Norway northerly and hold in to Throndhjem, and there they came to speech of men and asked for tidings. It was told them that a shift of rulers had come to pass in the land. Hakon the earl was by then fallen, and Olaf Tryggvason set in his place, and all Norway was fallen into his power. Olaf the king put forth the change of faith in Norway. Men yielded thereto in unlike fashion. Kjartan and his folk aid their ship into Nidoyce. At this time were there a many Iceland men in Norway of such as were men of worship. Three ships lay there by the bridges, and Icelandmen owned them all. One ship owned Brand the Openhanded, the son of Vermund Thorgrimson. The second ship owned Hallfred Troublous-skald. The third ship two brethren owned: the one hight Bjarni, the other Thorhall; they were sons of Broad-Skeggi from Fleetlithe in the east country. These men had all been minded to fare out to Iceland that summer, but the king had laid a ban on all these ships, because they would not take the faith which he set before them. All the Iceland men greet Kjartan well, but Brand the best, for they had been much known one to the other aforetime. Now the Icelanders took rede together, and this was agreed among them, to gainsay the faith which the king offered them; and all those were in league together who are here aforenamed. Now Kjartan and his fellows laid their ship against the bridges, and cleared the ship, and were busy with their goods, Olaf the king was in the town. He learns the coming of this ship, and therewith that there should be many men aboard her who were of great account. It was at harvest-tide

on a fair-weather day,i that men fared out of the town to swimming in the water of Nid: Kjartan's folk see this. Then spake Kjartan to his fellows, that they should fare to the swimming for their disport that day. They do so. One man there far outdid the others. Then Kjartan asks Bolli if he will try feats of swimming with the townsman. Bolli answers: I trow that I am no match for him. I wot not whither thy valour is now flown, saith Kjartan, but I shall make trial thereof. Bolli answers : That mayst thou do if it likes thee. Now Kjartan flings himself into the river and makes for that man who is best skilled at swimming, and straightway draws him under, and holds him down for a space : Kjartan lets him come up, and when they have been above water no long time, that man grips at Kjartan and draws him under, and they abode below no short time, but Kjartan deemed it enow; again come they up; no word spake they one to the other. A third time fare they down, and then were they much the longest under ; Kjartan deems now that he knows not how that game should fare, and Kjartan deemed that never before was he come into such sore straits; the end of it was that they come up and strike out for the shore. Then spake the townsman : Who is this man? Kjartan told his name. The townsman spake: Thou art a good swimmer : is it so that thou art as well skilled in other sports as in this one? Kjartan answers, but somewhat slowly: It was told of when I was in Iceland that the rest were even as this one; but now is this of little worth. The townsman spake: That makes some odds, with whom thou hast had dealing; why askest thou me nought? Kjartan spake : I reck not of thy name. The townsman saith: Sooth it is that thou art a man of might, but somewhat over-bold is thy speech; yet none the less shalt thou wot my name, and with whom thou hast been tried in swimming. Here is Olaf the king Tryggvason. Kjartan answereth nothing, and turns thence straightway cloakless. He had on a kirtle of red scarlet. By then was the king wellnigh clad; he calls to Kjartan, and bade him not fare so fast. Kjartan turns back, but somewhat slowly. Then the king takes from his shoulders a good cloak, and gave it to Kjartan : he should not, said he, go cloakless to his men. Kjartan thanks the king for his gift, and goes to his men and shows them the cloak. His men were not best pleased at this; they deemed that Kjartan had put himself into the king's power overmuch. Things are now quiet. The weather set in hard that autumn; there was much frost and cold. The heathen men say that it is nought wonderful that the weather took an ill turn: it points to the new-fangled ways of the king and this his new faith, at which the gods are wroth. The Icelanders abode that winter all together in the town; Kjartan was by far the foremost of them. The weather betters, and a great company of men came to the town at the wordsending of Olaf the king. Many men had taken the christian faith in Throndhjem, but many more were they who withstood. On a day the king held a Thing in the town out on the eres, and preached the faith before men, a long message and fair-spoken. The Throndhjemers had a host of men, and offered battle to the king. Quoth the king that they must wot that he deemed that he had dealt with greater odds than that he should fight there with thorpdwellers of Throndhjem. Then fear shot into the bonders' breasts, and they yielded all into the king's hand, and much people was there christened. Then was the Thing sundered. That same evening the king sent men to the lodging of the Icelanders, and bade them give ear to what they talked of. They do so; much din was there to hear within. Then Kjartan took up-the word, and spake to Bolli: Is it so, kinsman, that thou art eager to take to that faith which the king bids us have? I am nought eager thereto, answereth Bolli, for that faith seems to me most childish. Asks Kjartan: Did ye deem that the king used any threats against those who would not give in to his will? Bolli answers: In good sooth we deemed that the king spake no dark word when he said that they should meet with much evil at his hands. To no man will I yield against my will, saith Kjartan, while I may stand upright and wield weapons: I deem it also a coward's part to be taken like a lamb out of the fold or a fox out of a snare: I deem that choice far the better, if a man must die, to win somewhat beforehand whereby his name shall abide long after him. Asks Bolli: What wilt thou do? I may not hide it from thee, saith Kjartan: I would burn the king's house over his head. No' coward's rede I call that, saith Bolli: and yet, as I think, this shall not come to fulfil ment: the king must be a lucky wight and of mickle good hap; he has moreover a trusty guard day and night. Kjartan said that most men's hearts fail them in danger, though they be right good carles. Bolli said that it was yet to see whose valour should be doubted; but many men agreed together, that this was but idle talk. And when

the king's men had learned all this, then fared they thence, and tell the king all this tale. The next morning the king will hold a Thing, Thereto are summoned all the Iceland men, and when the Thing was set, the king stood up and thanked men for their coming thither, such as would be his friends and had given him troth. He called the Icelanders to speech with him. The king asks them if they will take chrisom. They give no good answer thereto. Saith the king, that they are choosing for themselves that lot which shall be the worser: Which of you deemed it the best rede to burn my house over me? Then answers Kjartan: Thou wilt be thinking that he will not have the courage to come forward who said this; but here mayst thou see him. Yea, I may see thee, saith the king, and a man of no small redes: but it will not be granted thee to stand over the slain body of me; and thou hast guilt enow herein that thou shouldst nevermore threaten to burn kings in their houses, for the cause that it may be the better known to thee; but inasmuch as I wist not whether heart went with speech in thee, but thou hast come forward in manly wise, therefore I will not take thy life for this cause: it may be too that thou shalt hold the faith the better as thou speakest now more against it than others: this also do I know, that it shall so come to pass with thy shipmates, that they shall take the faith on that day when thou lettest thyself be baptised willingly. I deem moreover that it is like that thy kinsmen and friends will pay much heed to that which thou tellest them when ye come out to Iceland: and it is much my foreboding that thou, Kjartan, wilt have a better belief when thou settest sail from Norway than thou hadst when thou earnest hither. Fare ye now in peace and truce howso ye will from this mote. I shall not force you to become christians, for god so speaks, that he is fain that none should come to him unwilling. Good cheer was made at the king's speech, yet mostly from the christian men. But the heathen men charged Kjartan that he should answer as he would. Then spake Kjartan: Fain are we to thank thee, king, that ye give us good peace : and that way mayst. thou best lead us to take thy faith, if thou overlook our great misdeeds and speak to us in all blitheness, even when ye have to-day all our lives in your hand to do as ye will with them; and I am minded for my part to take so much and no more of the faith in Norway, that I pay little heed to Thor the next winter when I come to Iceland. Then saith the king, and he smiled: This is well seen from the bearing of Kjartan, that he deems that there is more trust in his own might and weapons than in Thor and Odin. Then was the Thing sundered. Many men egged on the king in the meantime to force Kjartan's folk to take the faith, and they deemed it ill-advised to have so many heathen men in their midst. The king answers wrathfully, says that he deems that there are many christian men who are not of even worth with Kjartan and his company ; and for such men may one wait long time. The king lets much useful work be fashioned that winter; he lets build a church and much eke the cheaping stead; that church was wholly done by Yule. Then spake Kjartan, that they should go so near to the church that they might see the manner of that belief which the christian men held: many agreed thereto, and said that it would be mickle sport. Now goeth Kjartan with his company, and Bolli; there is also Hailfred a-faring and many men of the Icelanders. The king preached the faith before men, both a long message and fair-worded, and the christian men made good cheer at his speech. But when Kjartan's folk were gone to their lodging, much talk arose among them how the king had seemed to them now at the season which christian men call wellnigh the greatest high-tide : because the king said so that we might hear it, that last night was that chieftain born on whom we should now trow if we do as the king bids us. Kjartan saith : Such seemed to me the king when first I saw him that straightway I knew surely that he was a man of the most worship: and that has endured ever since, when I have seen him in man-motes; but much the best seemed he to me to-day; and my mind it is that all our cause lieth hereon, that we should trow him to be the true god in whom the king bids us trow; and I well wot that the king may not be more eager that I take his faith, than I to let myself be christened : and this alone withholds me from going here and now before the king, that the day is far spent, so that the king will now be at table; but that day shall tarry when we countrymen all let christen us. Bolli agreed well to this, and bade Kjartan alone rule in this matter. The debate of Kjartan's folk was told to the king before the boards were taken away; for the king had set spies in the lodging of the heathen men. The king was right glad thereof and spake: Kjartan has made sooth the saying that hightides are best for hale. And straightway in the morning early as the king was

going to the church Kjartan met him in the street with a mickle following of men. Kjartan bespake the king with mickle blithesomeness, and said that he had an errand unto him. The king took well his greeting, and said that he had learned of his errand full clearly: and this business shall be made easy for thee. Kjartan bade tarry not to lead him to the water, and said that much might well be needed. Saith the king, and he smiled : Yea, Kjartan, saith he, we twain shall not sunder by reason of hard bargaining, though thou shouldst be somewhat dear in the cheaping. Then were Kjartan and Bolli christened, and all their shipmates, and much other folk. This was on the second day of Yule before the office. Then the king bade Kjartan to his Yule-feast, and Bolli his kinsman also. It is the tale of most men that Kjartan handselled troth to the king on the day when both he and Bolli put off their chrisom raiment. Hallfred was not christened on that day, because he would have nought for it but the king himself should hold him at the font. The king put that off till the next day after. Kjartan and Bolli abode with the king for what was left of the winter. The king held Kjartan above all men for the sake of his kindred and great deeds, and it is told of all that Kjartan was so well-beloved that he had no unfriend at the court. This too said all men that no such man had come from Iceland as was Kjartan. Bolli was also a right valiant man and well judged of by good men. Now the winter so wears, and when the spring came, men made ready for their journeys whithersoever each had a mind.

Chapter 41

Kalf Asgeirson goes to meet Kjartan and asks what he was minded to do for his part that summer. Kjartan answers: This would be most to my mind that we should steer our ship for England, because good is now the cheaping there for christian folk. And yet I will first speak with the king before I stablish this rede, because it misliked him that I should fare hence when we twain spoke thereof this spring. Then Kalf went thence, but Kjartan to speech of the king and greets him well. The king welcomed him blithely, and asked of what he had been talking with those his fellows. Kjartan tells what was most to their minds. Then he said that his errand with the king was to ask way-leave of him for this journey. The king answers: This choice will I give thee, Kjartan; that thou fare out to Iceland this summer and bring men to be christian either perforce or by rede. But if that faring seem too troublesome to thee, then I will in no wise let thee out of my hand : since I am full sure that thou art better made to serve mighty men than to become a chapman here. Kjartan chose rather to be with the king than to fare to Iceland and preach the faith there: he was not willing, said he, to constrain his kindred perforce: and it is liker, as for my father and the other chieftains who are nigh akin to me, that they will be the more ready to do thy will if I abide in thy hands well cared for. Saith the king: This is chosen both needfully and valiantly. The king gave to Kjartan full raiment new cut out of scarlet: it beseemed him so well that men said they were of even height when they were paired together, Olaf the king and Kjartan. Olaf the king sent out to Iceland his court-priest, who hight Thangbrand : he brought his ship into Swanfirth and was with Hall of Side that winter at Washriver, and preached the faith to men both with blithe words and hard chastisements. Thangbrand slew two men who most withstood him. Hall took the faith in the spring, and was christened on Maundy Thursday before Easter, and all his house ; and then Gizur the White let christen him and Hjalti Skeggison and many other chieftains. And yet were those many more that gainsaid it, and scarce could peace be kept between heathen men and christian. The chieftains took rede to slay Thangbrand, and such men as should offer him their aid. For the sake of this unpeace Thangbrand went back to Norway and came to Olaf the king and told him what had betid in his journey; and said that he thought the christian faith would make no way in Iceland. The king was much wroth at this, and said that he was minded that many Icelanders should smart for it, save they looked well to their ways. That same summer was Hjalti Skeggison made outlaw at the Thing for speaking ill of the gods. Runolf Ulfson brought up the case against him: he dwelt at Dale under Islefell, and was the greatest of chieftains. That same summer fared Gizur from Iceland and Hjalti with him : they make Norway and fare straightway unto Olaf the king. The king receives them well, and he said that they had been well advised, and bade them abide with him, and

that they yeasay. At that time had Sverting the son of Runolf of Dale been in Norway the winter through, and was minded to sail for Iceland that summer; his ship was by then afloat before the bridges alboun and awaiting a fair wind. The king banned them forth-faring: he said that no ship should go to Iceland all summer. Sverting went before the king and put forward his tale; he asked way-leave for himself, and said that it was of great weight to him that the lading should not be borne out of the ship. The king spake, and wroth was he: It is well that the son of the blood-priest should be whereas he deems it the worse for him. So Sverting won nought of him. All that winter wore tidingless. The summer after the king sendeth Gizur the White and Hjalti Skeggison to Iceland to preach the faith anew; and he took four men as hostages for them, to wit, Kjartan Olafson, Halldor the son of Gudmund the Mighty, Kolbein the son of Thord Frey's priest, and Sverting son of Runolf of Dale. Bolli too made ready to fare with Gizur and Hjalti. Then he goeth to see Kjartan his kinsman and spake: Now am I boun for the journey, and I shall look for thee next winter, if next summer should be freer for thy faring than this one is: but we deem that we know well that the king will in no wise let thee go. We hold it for sooth withal that thou hast small heed to what delight is in Iceland when thou sittest at speech with Ingibjorg the king's sister. She was then at the court of Olaf the king, and was the most lovesome of women that were then in the land. Kjartan answers: Believe no such thing: but thou shalt bear to our kindred my greetings, and likewise to our friends.

Chapter 42

After this Kjartan and Bolli sundered. Gizur and Hjalti sail from Norway and speed well in the voyage: they come at the Thing-time to the Westman-isles, and fare to the mainland: they summoned their kinsfolk together and spake with them. Then fare they to the Althing and set forth the faith to men, both a long message and fair-Worded, and then all men in Iceland took the faith. Bolli rode to Herdholt from the Thing with Olaf his kinsman; he welcomed him much blithely. Bolli rode to Bathstead for his disport when he had been but a short while at home: he was well greeted there. Gudrun first asked him closely of his journeying, and next of Kjartan. Bolli gave full and free answer to all that Gudrun asked him: he said that of his journey no tidings were to tell: but as for Kjartan, mickle joy is it to say the sooth of his good hap; for he is at the court of Olaf the king, and is held there in greater worship than any other man. But it will be not unlooked for by me though we have here in the land little news of him this next winter. Then Gudrun asks whether aught bore on this other than the friendship betwixt him and the king. Bolli tells what was the talk of men concerning the friendship between him and Ingibjorg the king's sister, and said that it was much his mind that the king would rather give Ingibjorg to him than let him go, if he must make his choice. Gudrun said that these were good tidings: only so will Kjartan have his due, if he gets him a good wife. Then she let the talk drop, went away and was full red; but others misdoubted whether she deemed the tidings so good as she gave them out to be. Bolli abideth at home at Herdholt this summer, and had won much renown by this journey: all his kinsfolk and acquaintance set great store by his valiancy. Bolli had brought moreover much wealth out with him. He came ofttimes to Bathstead and talked with Gudrun. One time Bolli asked Gudrun how she would answer him, if he made suit for her. Then saith Gudrun quickly: Of such a thing must thou not think, Bolli: to no man may I be wedded while I know that Kjartan is alive. Bolli answers: Our boding is that thou wilt have to sit some winters manless, if thou art to abide Kjartan: he had the chance moreover of sending some message by me if he deemed the matter one of exceeding great weight. So they sundered after some more words said, and each of them held to his own way. Then Bolli rides home.

Chapter 43

Some while after Bolli speaks with Olaf his kinsman and said: To this pass is it come, kinsman, that I am minded to stablish my household and take me a wife. I deem that I am now come to my full strength. I would fain have for my suit thy good word and furtherance, because most men here are such that they hold thy word of great account. Olaf answers : Such are most women that we may reckon on it that a suit will be right welcome whereas thou art; nor is it like that thou hast brought this matter up without having set thy mind on the one upon whom thy choice will light. Saith Bolli: I shall not woo me a wife outside this countryside the while good matches lie so near to us: I will bid for Gudrun Osvifs daughter: she is now the most notable of women. Answers Olaf: That is the one suit with which I will have nought to do: it is in nowise less known to thee, Bolli, than to me, what talk there was of the love betwixt Kjartan and Gudrun. But if thou deemest this of exceeding great avail for thee, I cannot deal grudgingly therein, if it is agreed upon by thee and Osvif: but hast thou spoken aught of this matter to Gudrun? Bolli said that he had once only turned their speech that way, and she had not welcomed it overmuch: yet I ween that Osvif is like to rule most in this business. Olaf said that he would fare with him whenso it liked him. Not long after rides Bolli from home, and with him the sons of Olaf, Halldor and Steinthor: they were twelve men in all: they ride to Bathstead. Osvif greets them well, and his sons. Bolli summoned Osvif to speak with him, and puts forward his wooing, and asked for Gudrun his daughter. But Osvif answered in this wise: It is as thou wottest, Bolli, that Gudrun is a widow, and able to answer for herself: yet must I needs be fain hereof. Now goeth Osvif to Gudrun and saith to her that Bolli Thorleikson is come thither, and asks for thee to wife: now it is for thee to answer this suit. But I shall speedily make known my will herein, to wit, that Bolli be not sent away empty, if my rede may avail. Gudrun answers: Hastily dost thou deal in this suit: for Bolli on a time spake to me thereof, but I turned it off somewhat; and I am yet of the same mind. Then saith Osvif: Then shall many men say that this is spoken rather from pride than of mickle wisdom, if thou naysay such a man as is Bolli; but while I am to the fore I shall use foresight for you my children in such matters as I can look to better than ye. But when Osvif took this thing so athwart, Gudrun held out no longer for her part, but yet she was full hard in all wise. The sons of Osvif are much fain of this match: they deem that much gain will be theirs from an alliance with Bolli. But the long and short of it was that it was so agreed, that the betrothal went forward, and the bridal feast was appointed to be held at the time of winter nights. Then rode Bolli home to Herdholt, and telleth Olaf the issue of their redes. He shows that he is little pleased therewith. Bolli abides at I home till the time when he must seek to the wedding. Bolli bade Olaf his kinsman, but Olaf was not quick thereto; yet he fared at the prayer of Bolli. Worshipful was the feast at Bathstead. Bolli abode there all that winter. Bolli had little kindness at Gudrun's hands in their dealings together. But when the summer came, then went ships from land to land. Then were the tidings brought to Norway that Iceland was christened wholly. Olaf the king was right glad thereat, and gave leave to all those men whom he had held as hostages to go to Iceland or to fare whithersoever it liked them. Kjartan answered, inasmuch as he was captain over all those men who had been held as hostages: Have ye much thank, but this way shall we choose, to betake us to Iceland this summer. Then saith Olaf the king: We cannot take back this word of ours, Kjartan; and yet we spake rather for other men than for thee; because we reckon thee of such worth that thou hast tarried here more as a friend than as a hostage. I were fain that thou wert not eager to go out to Iceland, though thou hast highborn kindred there, for thou mayst have thy choice of a place in Norway such as there is not in Iceland. Then answereth Kjartan: Our lord reward you for the worship that ye have done to me since I came into your power. But I looked for this, that ye should grant me way-leave no less than to those others whom ye have held here awhile. The king said that so it should be; but hard to find, saith he, were such men among franklins as was Kjartan. That winter had Kalf Asgeirson been in Norway, and had before that come east from England with the ship of himself and Kjartan and their merchandise. And when Kjartan had gotten way-leave to the Iceland-faring he and Kalf took to their dighting for sea. And when the ship was all-boun, then goeth Kjartan to see Ingibjorg the king's sister.

She greeteth him well, and made place for him to sit by her, and they fall to speech together. Then saith Kjartan to Ingibjorg that he is boun to fare unto Iceland. Then answers she: We deem the rather, Kjartan, that thou hast done this of thine own free-will, than that men have egged thee on to fare from Norway to Iceland. But few words were there betwixt them thenceforward. Then Ingibjorg puts forth her hand to a meadcask that stood by her. She takes thence a white wimple adorned with gold and gives it to Kjartan, and said that for Gudrun Osvif 's daughter to fold around her head it was over good; but thou shalt give her the wimple for a bench-gift. I will that yon Iceland-women see this, that the woman of whom thou hast had speech in Norway is of no thrall's blood. There was a poke of fair web over all; it was the goodliest of jewels. Never shall I lead thee forth, said Ingibjorg: Now fare thou well, and hail. Thereafter Kjartan stands up and turned to Ingibjorg; and men hold it for sooth that they were loth to sunder. Now goeth Kjartan thence, and to the king: he told the king that he is now boun for faring. Olaf the king led Kjartan to the ship, and many men with him; and when they came whereas the ship was floating (there was a bridge from her to the land),k then the king took up the word: Here is a sword Kjartan, which thou shalt take of me now at our sundering : do thou let this weapon ever follow thy ways, for I ween that thou shalt not be a weaponbit man if thou bear this sword. It was the worshipfullest jewel, and much bedight. Kjartan thanked the king with fair words for all the honour and worship that he had bestowed upon him the while he abode in Norway. Then spake the king: This will I bid thee, Kjartan, that thou hold fast to thy faith. Thereafter sunder the king and Kjartan with much love. Then Kjartan goes out to the ship. The king looked after him and spake: Much is told of Kjartan and his kin : yet shall it be no light matter to wrestle with their weird.

Chapter 44

Now Kjartan and Kalf sail out to sea: they had a fair wind and were but a short while out: they made Whitewater in Burgfirth. These tidings were told of far and wide, to wit, the outcoming of Kjartan. This learns Olaf his father and other of his kinsfolk, and are much fain of him. Olaf rides straightway east from the Dales and south to Burgfirth. Much joyous is the meeting betwixt that father and son. Olaf bids Kjartan to him with as many men as he would. Kjartan took this well, and said that he was minded to have no other home in Iceland. Now Olaf rides back to Herdholt, but Kjartan is with the ship all summer. Now he is told of the marriage of Gudrun, and was nought moved thereat; but to many had that been a fear before. Gudmund Solmundson the sister's husband of Kjartan and Thurid his sister came to the ship. Kjartan greeteth them well. Asgeir Mad-pate likewise came to the ship to meet with Kalf his son. There was a-faring with Asgeir Hrefna his daughter: she was the fairest of women. Kjartan bade Thurid his sister to take such of the lading as she would. The like spake Kalf to Hrefna. Now Kalf unlocks a great chest, and bade them go thereto. That day a strong wind arose, and Kjartan and his folk leapt out to make their ship fast; and when they had ended they go back to the booths. Kalf goes first into the booth. Thurid and Hrefna had by then turned out great part of the chest. Then Hrefna catches up the wimple and opens it out. Then speak they of it, how it is the greatest of treasures. Then saith Hrefna, that she will fold the wimple around her head. Thurid said that was well thought of, and now Hrefna doth so. Kalf sees this, and said that it was not well done; he bade her take it off at her best speed : because that is the one thing that Kjartan and I own not in common. And as they talk thus Kjartan comes into the booth: he had heard their speech, and struck in straightway and said that it was no matter. Then Hrefna sat yet encoifed. Kjartan looks at her steadfastly and spake: I deem the wimple beseems thee well, Hrefna, quoth he: I have a mind that it should best befall if I owned both wimple and wife. Then answereth Hrefna: Thus may men deem, that thou mayst not be fain to take thee a mate rashly, but to get the woman whom thou wooest. Kjartan said that he recked not much whom he wedded, but he would in no wise be a vain suitor long time. I see that this gaud sits well on thee, and it is meet that thou be my wife. Now Hrefn. a takes the wimple off her head and hands it to Kjartan, and he puts it away. Gudmund and Thurid asked Kjartan northward to them for guesting that winter. Kjartan behight him to fare. Kalf Asgeirson made ready to go northward with his

father. He and Kjartan sunder now their fellowship: it fared in all kindliness and friendship. Now Kjartan rides from the ship and westward to the Dales. They were twelve in company. Kjartan cometh home to Herdholt, and all men are fain of him. Kjartan lets flit his goods north from the ship that harvest. Those twelve men that rode east with Kjartan abode all of them at Herdholt that winter. Olaf and Osvif yet held to their old wont about the feasting : each should seek to the other in turn harvest and harvest about. This harvest the feast was to be at Bathstead, but Olaf and the Herdholt-folk were to seek thither. Now spake Gudrun with Bolli, and said that she deemed he had not told her all the sooth concerning the outcoming of Kjartan. Bolli said that he had told her whatso he knew most soothfast thereof. Gudrun spake little of this matter. But it was easily seen that she liked it ill: for many men deemed that she was yet much longing after Kjartan, though she hid it. Now wears the time till the harvest-feast should be held at Bathstead. Olaf made him ready to fare and bade Kjartan fare with him. Kjartan said that he would abide at home to ward the stead. Olaf bade him not deal so as to shun his kinsfolk: Do thou mind thee of this, Kjartan, that thou hast never loved any man so much as Bolli thy fosterbrother. It is my will that thou fare. Soon moreover may ye kinsmen be set at one if ye meet with one another. Kjartan doth as his father bade him, and now takes he his scarlet raiment, the which Olaf the king gave him at their parting, and tricked himself out bravely. He girded on him the sword King's-loom. He had on his head a helm of red gold and a shield at his side of red, and thereon the holy cross drawen in gold. He had a spear in his hand, and gold-dight was the socket thereof. All his men were in coloured clothes: they were in all some three tens of men. Now ride they away from Herdholt, and fare till they come to Bathstead. A very great company was there before them.

Chapter 45

Bolli went forth to meet Olaf's folk, and with him the sons of Osvif, and they greet them well. Bolli went to Kjartan and kist him. Kjartan took his greeting. Thereafter were they led in. Bolli was therewith most joyous. Olaf took it wholly well, but Kjartan somewhat amiss. The feast fared forth well. Bolli owned some stud-horses, that were called the best: the stallion was mickle and fair, and had never got the worse in fight. He was white of hue, with ears and forelock red. Three mares followed him, of the same hue as the stallion. These horses would Bolli give to Kjartan; but Kjartan said that he was no horseman and would not have them. Olaf bade him take the horses : This is the worthiest of gifts. Kjartan said nay downright. After that they sundered all unblithely. And the Herdholt-folk fared home, and now is there peace. Kjartan was somewhat sad that winter; men gat but little speech of him : Olaf deemed that mickle hurt. That winter after Yule Kjartan took himself from home ; they were twelve in all; they were bound for the north-country. Now ride they on their way till they come north to Asbjornsness in Willowdale, and there is Kjartan welcomed with the most blitheness and whole-heartedness. The house was kept in the most open-handed fashion. Hall Gudmundson was then nigh twenty years of his age. He was near akin to those Laxdalers. It is said by all men that no man has been more valiant in every way in all the Northland firths. Hall welcomed Kjartan his kinsman with mickle blithesomeness. Straightway now are games set up at Asbjornsness, and men were gathered thereto from wide about the countryside. They came eastward from Midfirth and from Waterness, and out of Waterdale and even from out of Longdale. A very great company was there. It was in all men's mouths how far Kjartan surpassed other men. Then they gat them to play, and Hall put himself forward therein. He bade Kjartan to the play: we would, kinsman, that thou show us thy skill herein. Kjartan answers : Little have I tried me in play of late; other things were nearer to hand with Olaf the king : but I will not gainsay thee as at this time. Now Kjartan betakes him to the play : those men were set against him who were the starkest there. So they strive all day : no man was there like Kjartan either in might or litheness. And at even, when the play was done, then stands up Hall Gudmundson and spake : It is the bidding of my father and his will concerning all those men that have sought hither from afar, that they should all abide here nightlong, and take their disport here in the morning. This message was well hailed, and it was deemed to be bidden in great-hearted wise. Kalf Asgeir-son was

come thither, and there was no lack of love betwixt him and Kjartan: Hrefna his sister was also there, and was full gloriously arrayed. A hundred of men or more were abiding at the stead overnight. The day after they betook them to the play. Kjartan sat then by the play and looked on. Thurid his sister came to talk with him and spake thus: It is told me, kinsman, that thou art somewhat dumb the winter long : men say that thou must be longing after Gudrun. Men build on this, that there is no blitheness betwixt thee and Bolli thy kinsman, so mickle love as ye have at all times had one for the other. Do thou so well and duly, that thou let not thyself brood on this, and envy not thy kinsman his good luck. Most redeful to us seems this, that thou take thee a wife according to thy speech of last summer, though it be not altogether an even match for thee whereas Hrefna is: for such canst thou not meet with in the land. Asgeir her father is a man of might and of good stock : he has no lack of wealth moreover to gladden this rede : and another daughter of his is wedded to a valiant man. Thou hast told me also that Kalf Asgeir-son is the doughtiest of men : their house is most bounteous. It is my will that thou fall to speech with Hrefna, and methinks thou wilt deem that there wit follows fairness. Kjartan gave good heed to this and said that she steered the cause well. Sithence Kjartan and Hrefna are brought to speech together : they talk ail day. In the evening Thurid asked of Kjartan how the word-take of Hrefna pleased him. He spake well thereof, and said that he deemed the woman to be most bounteous in all wise so far as he might see. The next morning were men sent to Asgeir and he was bidden to Asbjornsness. Now they took counsel together over the suit, and Kjartan now bids Hrefna to wife, the daughter of Asgeir. He gave good hearing to the suit, for he was a wise man, and could well mark how seemly for him was this marriage. Kalf is much eager in this suit: I will let spare nought. Hrefna likewise gave no denial on her part, and bade her father rule. So now is this suit brought to an end and bound by witnesses. Kjartan makes it known that nought else would like him but that the bridal shall be at Herdholt. Asgeir and Kalf gainsay it not; so now is the bridal gathering appointed to be at Herdholt when five weeks are gone of summer. Thereafter rode Kjartan home with great gifts. Olaf spake well of these tidings, for Kjartan was far more gladsome than before he fared from home. Kjartan fasted dry all through the Long-fast, and did it at no man's dooming here in the land; for so is it told of men, that he was first of all men to keep dry fast in this land here. So wondrous a thing men deemed it that Kjartan lived so long meatless that men fared long journeys to see him. In like fashion were the other deeds of Kjartan, beyond those of other men: so Easter-tide went by. After that Olaf and Kjartan let summon men to a mickle feast. Asgeir and Kalf came south at the appointed summons, and Gudmund and Hall: and they had altogether six tens of men. Kjartan's folk also were a great company. A brave feast was that, whereas they held the guesting for a week. Kjartan gave Hrefna the wimple for linen-fee, and that gift was all-renowned, inasmuch as no man there was so wealthy that he had seen or owned such a treasure. Now it is the saying of men who know, that eight ounces of gold were wrought into the wimple. Kjartan also was so gladsome at the wedding that he gave joy to all men by his talk, and told of his journeyings: men there deemed it of mickle worth, such great matters were dealt with therein, seeing that he had served the most renowned of chieftains, to wit, Olaf Tryggvason the king. But when the guesting was over and done, Kjartan offered good gifts to Gudmund and Hall, and other mighty men: that father and son won mickle word-stir by this feast. Good love groweth up betwixt Kjartan and Hrefna.

Chapter 46

Olaf and Osvif held to their friendship, though things went somewhat awry with the younger men. That summer had Olaf a home-bidding half a month before winter. Osvif had also summoned to a feast at winter-nights. Either of them then bade the other to him with as many men as he deemed would be to his most worship. Osvif had then the first to seek to Olaf; and he came to Herdholt at the time appointed. With him fared Bolli and Gudrun and the sons of Osvif. The next morning a certain woman was speaking, as she and others went out of the hall, of how the women should be set in the seats. At that same time it so befell that Gudrun was come over against the shut-bed wherein Kjartan was wont

to lie. Kjartan was there clothing him, and was doing about him a kirtle of red scarlet. Then said Kjartan to those women who had spoken of the placing of the women, since none other was quicker to make answer: Hrefna shall sit in the highseat and be held first every way, whiles I am on live. But Gudrun had ever aforetime been given the highseat at Herdholt and elsewhere. Gudrun heard this and looked at Kjartan and changed hue, but answered nought. The next day spake Gudrun to Hrefna that she should put on her the wimple, and so let men look on the best jewel that had ever come to Iceland. Kjartan was there, though not very near, and heard what Gudrun spake. He was quicker to answer than Hrefna: She shall not put on the wimple at this guesting, because I deem it of greater weight that Hrefna should own that best of treasures than that the guests should at this time have eyesport therewith. A week should the harvest-feast endure at Olaf's. The next day spake Gudrun privily to Hrefna that she should show her the wimple. She said that so it should be. The day after they go to the out-bower wherein were the jewels. Hrefna opened the chest and took out the fair-woven poke, and from the poke she took the wimple and showed it to Gudrun. She opened the wimple and looked at it awhile, and spake nought either of blame or praise. Then Hrefna put back the wimple, and they went to their places. After that fared forth the glee and game: but that day when the guests should ride away, Kjartan was much busied with getting shift of horses for such as were come from afar, and such faring-service for each as he needed. Kjartan had not the sword King's-loom in hand when he had turned to this business; yet was he seldom wont to let it be far from his hand. Sithence went he to his room, whereas the sword had lain, and it was gone. He went straight to his father to tell him of the ill-hap. Olaf spake: Herein must we fare most privily: and I shall put men to seek news in every flock of those that ride forth. And so did he. An the White should ride with the folk of Osvif, and watch for the off-turning or tarrying of men. They ride inward by Leashaws and past the homestead that hight Shaws,and they tarried by the shaw-side and there got off their horses. Thorolf Osvifson fared from the stead and some other men with him: they turned aside into a certain copse while the rest tarried by the shaw-side. An went with them as far as Laxwater that falls from Saelingsdale, and said then that he must turn back. Thorolf made answer that no hurt would it have been had he not fared at all. That night had a little snow fallen, so that steps might be tracked. An rode back to the shaw and followed up the tracks of Thorolf to a certain well or fen. There he feels about with his hand,and gript the sword-hilt. An would have witness with him in this matter, and rode for Thorarin at Saelingsdale-Tongue, and he fared with An to take up the sword. After that An brought the sword to Kjartan. Kjartan wrapt it in a napkin and laid it in a chest. That since hight Sword-well, where Thorolf hid King's-loom. Now men held their peace over this, but the scabbard was never again found. Kjartan had ever less heed to the sword sithence than aforetime. Kjartan said that this bit him deep, and he could not let it rest so. Olaf spake: Let not this thing bite thee: an ugly trick forsooth have they played thee, but it hurts thee not: let not others have cause to mock at us in that we break the peace for such a thing, whereas against us are our friends and kinsfolk. And at this counsel of Olaf Kjartan let things be. After this Olaf made ready to seek to the homefeast at Bathstead at winternights, and spake with Kjartan that he should fare thither. Kjartan was loth thereto, and yet pledged himself to the faring at the prayer of his father. Hrefna should fare likewise, and would leave the wimple at home. Thorgerd the housewife asked: When wilt thou take out so brave a jewel if it must lie in chest when thou farest to guestings? Hrefna answers : Many men speak thus, that it is nought unlike that I may come thither whereas are fewer men of evil heart than are at Bath-stead. Thorgerd answered : We put not much trust in those men who let such tales drift from house to house here. But forasmuch as Thorgerd was exceeding eager, Hrefna had the wimple with her, and Kjartan gainsaid it not when he saw how his mother would have it. After this they betake them to the journey, and come to Bath-stead at even, and gat good welcome there. Thorgerd and Hrefna gave over their raiment into safe keeping. But in the morning, when the women would take their array, Hrefna seeks the wimple, and it was gone from where she had laid it for safety; it was sought for far and wide but was not found. Gudrun said it was most like that the wimple had been left behind at home, or that she had packed it heedlessly and it had fallen out. Now Hrefna tells Kjartan that the wimple was lost. He answered and said that it was no easy matter to look to things

with them, and bade her now let it be in peace: sithence he tells his father what game was toward. Olaf answers : Yet would I now as aforetime that thou let be, and suffer this trouble to pass thee by: I will make search herein privily: for to this end would I strive in all wise, that thou and Bolli should not be twined: a whole skin is best to bind, kinsman, quoth he. Kjartan answers: Well wot I, father, that thou strivest for the good of all here; and yet I wot not if I can endure to be driven thus askew by the Bathstead folk. On the day when men should ride from the guesting Kjartan betakes him to speech, and saith thus: I warn thee of this, Bolli kinsman, that thou must deal with us more manly henceforth than hitherto: I shall not bring this forward in privy speech, since it is now known of every man what loss hath been here, the which we deem has fallen into your garth. At harvest when we kept the feast at Herdholt my sword was taken: now came that back, but not the scabbard: now again hath been lost here a jewel that may be deemed a thing of price; and yet will I now have back both the one and the other. Then answers Bolli: We are nought to blame, Kjartan, in this thou dost put upon us: all else might we sooner look for from thee than that thou shouldst lay stealing to our charge. Saith Kjartan: Such men we deem to have taken rede herein as thou mayst arede better if thou wilt: ye fall more foul of us than need is: long time have we borne with your enmity: now shall it be made plain that it may not thus be longer endured. Then Gudrun makes answer to his speech and spake: There stirrest thou to flame, Kjartan, a fire, the which it were better if it reeked not: now though it be so as thou sayest, that there be certain men here who have taken rede hereto that the wimple should be lost, yet I trow that they have but come by their own; hold ye now that for sooth which best liketh you, as to what is become of the wimple: but I deem it nought amiss though it be so bestowed that Hrefna have little boot of the wimple for her arraying henceforward. After this they sunder somewhat wrathfully. Those Herdholt folk ride home. So now ends the homefeast. There was yet peace of a sort. Nought more was heard of the wimple. Many men held it for sooth that Thorolf had burned the wimple with fire by the rede of Gudrun his sister. That winter early died Asgeir Madpate. His sons took therewith stead and goods.

Chapter 47

After Yule in the winter Kjartan gathers men to him. They were in all six tens of men. Kjartan told his father nought of his purpose in this faring, and Olaf asked little thereof. Kjartan had with him tents and food. Now rideth Kjartan on his way till he comes to Bathstead. It was at that time much the custom that the privies were without and no short way from the dwelling-houses, and so was it at Bathstead. Kjartan let take all the doors of the house there, and banned outgoing to all men, and they did their easements within for three nights. Thereafter Kjartan rides home to Herdholt and every of his faring-fellows to his own place. Olaf was ill pleased of this faring. Thorgerd said that it needed not foul words, and said that the Bathstead men had done enow for such or greater dishonour. Then spake Hrefna : Hadst thou speech, Kjartan, with any at Bathstead? He answers : Little fashion was there of that. He saith that Bolli and he had sundered after certain words. Then spake Hrefna, and smiled: It is told me for sooth that thou and Gudrun will have talked together; and so have I learned, that she had the wimple around her, and it beseemed her passing well. Kjartan answers, and reddened much therewith ; it was plainly seen that he was wroth that she made a mock of this: That came not in sight of mine eyes of which thou speakest, Hrefna, quoth Kjartan; nor doth Gudrun need to deck herself with the wimple to be of better seeming than all other women. Then Hrefna stayed her speech thereof. Those Bathstead folk like it ill, and they deemed it much greater dishonour and worser than if Kjartan had slain a man or two from among them. Most wood in this business were the sons of Osvif, but Bolli rather lulled them. Gudrun spake little thereover, and yet men marked from her words that it was not sure whether any held it of greater weight than she. Now waxed the enmity to its highest betwixt the Bathstead folk and them of Herdholt. And when the winter was far spent Hrefna bare a child; it was a man-child and was named Asgeir. Then Thorarin the bonder at Tongue makes it known that he would fain sell the lands of Tongue. This was both for that he had scant loose-fee, and moreover that he

deemed hatred to be growing much betwixt men of that countryside, whereas he held either side dear to him. Bolli deemed it needful to buy a holding for himself, because the Bathstead folk had few lands but much cattle. Bolli and Gudrun rode to Tongue by the rede of Osvif: they deemed it a timely hap to take up land by their very doors, and Osvif bade them not suffer the business to come to nought for the sake of things of little weight. Sithence they and Thorarin took counsel together over this bargain, and they agreed together how dear it should be, and what should be made over therefor, and so the bargain was struck between Thorarin and Bolli. But as yet was it not bound by witnesses, because there were not so many men there as they deemed it to be lawful. After this Bolli and Gudrun ride home. But when Kjartan Olafson learns these tidings he rides straightway with eleven men and came to Tongue early in the day, Thorarin greeteth him well and bade him abide there. Kjartan said he must ride home that evening, but he would tarry there awhile. Thorarin asked his errand. Kjartan answers : This is my errand hither, to speak with thee somedeal about the buying of thy land, as to which Bolli has come to terms with thee: inasmuch as it mislikes me that thou sell this land to Bolli and Gudrun. Thorarin said that he could scarce do otherwise ; seeing that the price both is a good one that Bolli is plight to pay me for the land, and also it shall be paid quickly. Kjartan spake : It shall be no scathe to thee though Bolli buy not the land, for I will buy it of thee for the like price, and it will nought avail thee long to gainsay what it is my will shall be. For this is to be known, that I shall rule mostly in the countryside here, and yet do more after the mind of other men than of the Bathstead-folk. Thorarin answers : The word of the lord must be my law in this matter : but this would be most to my mind, that this bargain should hold on such terms as Bolli and I were agreed upon. Kjartan spake : I call that no land-cheap-ing which is not bound by witnesses : do thou now one of two things : either handsel me the land straightway at the same price as thou didst settle with the others, or abide thyself on thy land else. Thorarin chose to sell him the land. Now were witnesses straightway taken to this bargain. Kjartan rode home after the land-cheaping. This was noised abroad through all the Broadfirth-dales. The same evening was it made known at Bathstead. Then spake Gudrun: So methinks it, Bolli, that Kjartan hath given thee choice of two things somedeal harder than he gave to Thorarin : to wit, that thou get thee gone from this countryside with little worship, or show thyself at some meeting of you twain somewhat unslower than thou hast been hitherto. Bolli answers nothing and went straightway from this talk. And now was there peace for what was left of the Long fast. On the third-day of Easter Kjartan rode from home with one man. An the Black went with him. They come to Tongue that day. Kjartan will that Thorarin ride with him west to Saurby to gather in loans due to him, for he had mickle money-dealings there. Thorarin had ridden to another stead. Kjartan tarried there awhile and waited for him. That same day was Thorhalla Wordy come thither. She asks Kjartan whither he was minded to fare. He said that he should fare west to Saurby. She asks : By which way wilt thou ride? Kjartan answers: I shall ride Saelingsdale going west and Swinedale coming eastwards. She asked how long he would be. Answers Kjartan : It is most like that I shall ride east on Fifth-day. Wilt thou do an errand for me? said Thorhalla; I have a kinsman west by Whitedale in Saurby, and he has promised me half a mark in wadmal. I were fain that thou claim it and bring it eastwards with thee. Kjartan promised so to do. Then cometh Thorarin home and betook him to fare with Kjartan : they ride west over Saelingsdale heath and come at even to Knoll to those brethren and sister there. Kjartan gat good welcome there, because there was the most friendship betwixt them. Thorhalla Wordy came home to Bathstead at even. The sons of Osvif ask her what of manfolk she had met that day. She said that she had met with Kjartan Olafson. They asked what he was minded to do. She told so much as she knew thereof: and never has he been more valiant of seeming than now : and it is nought strange that such an one deems all else lowly beside him. And again spake Thorhalla : Plain to see deemed it that over nought was Kjartan so merry as over the land-cheap of him and Thorarin. Gudrun spake: Well may Kjartan do all that liketh him with a high hand, since it hath been tried that what dishonour soever he putteth on men, there is none dare shoot a shaft against him. Both Bolli and the sons of Osvif were by at the talk of Gudrun and Thorhalla. Ospak and his brethren answer little, and that something disdainfully toward Kjartan, as was ever their wont. Bolli made as though he heard not, as ever when

Kjartan was ill spoken of; for his wont was either to hold his peace or to gainsay them.

Chapter 48

Kjartan Olafson sitteth the fourth day of Easter-tide at Knoll. There was the most game and glee that might be. In the night after An uttered ill sounds in his sleep, and he was awakened, and they asked him what he had dreamed. He saith that a woman uncomely came to him, and pulled me outward to the beam ; she had a cutlass in the one hand, and a trough in the other; she set the cutlass against my breast and rent open all the belly, and took out the guts, and let small wood come instead thereof: after that went she out, saith An. Kjartan and the rest laughed much at the dream, and said he should be named An Copsebelly : they caught at him, and said that they must try whether there be copsewood in his belly or no. Then Aud took up the word, and said that no need was there to mock at that so much; and this is my counsel, that Kjartan do one of two things : either that he abide here with us longer than he gave out, or that he ride hence with a greater following than he brought hither. Kjartan spake: It may be that An Copsebelly seemeth to you much fairspoken as he sitteth and talketh with you all the day, seeing that ye count as wisdom all that he dreameth; but rare shall I even as I was minded before these dreams. Kjartan set forth early on the fifth day of Easterweek. Those brethren, Thorkel Whelp and Knut, rode in company with him at the bidding of Aud; and they were twelve in all. Kjartan came and claimed the wadmal for Thorhalla Wordy even as he promised ; afterward rode he along Swinedale southward. Now this came to pass at Bathstead in Saelingsdale, that Gudrun was early afoot even as the sun rose, and went to where her brethren lay; she laid hold of Ospak. He awoke speedily thereat, and so did most of those brethren, and asked what she would that she was so early afoot. Gudrun said that she would fain know what they were minded to do. Ospak said that they might rest in peace so far as that went; little work there was as at that time. Spake Gudrun: Good were the temper ye are of, if ye were daughters to some bonder, and would in no wise let aught come from you whether good or ill; but for such despite and shame as Kjartan hath put upon you, yet sleep ye none the less, though he rideth hereby with but one man, even by the garth; and such men as ye be have verily swine’s minds; methinks too it is no more like that ye will find heart to seek to Kjartan at home, if ye dare not meet him now that he has but one or maybe two men with him; but ye sit at home and prate finely, and indeed ye are over many. Said Ospak that she made much of it, but it was ill to gainsay her: he sprang up straightway and clad him, and so did each of those other brethren. Afterward they made ready to lie in wait for Kjartan. Then Gudrun bade Bolli fare with them. Bolli said that it beseemed him not, because of the tie of kinship betwixt him and Kjartan; and he told how lovingly Olaf had fostered him. Gudrun saith: True is that of which thou hast here told; but thou canst not carry thy good luck so far as to do that whick is well liking to all men: she saith also that their life together is ended if he turn aside from this faring. But with the flyting of Gudrun all the ill-doing and the scathe which they had from Kjartan grew greater to Bolli, and he armed him speedily. Five in all were the sons of Osvif: Ospak and Helgi, Vandrad and Torrad and Thorolf; Bolli was the sixth, Gudlaug the seventh; he was the sister’s son of Osvif and the likeliest of men. There was Odd, and Stein, the sons of Thorhalla Wordy; nine altogether. They rode to Swinedale, and took their stand beside a gill hight Goatgill, and they tied up their horses and sat thereby. Bolli was silent all the day and sat high up on the gill brow. That gill runneth southward from the fell and forth into the river. The highway lay behind some knolls above where the sons of Osvif were set. Now when Kjartan and his folk were come south out of the straits and the dale grew wider, then Kjartan bade them turn back. Thorkel said that they would ride to the dale foot. And when they were come south to that fell-cot which hight North-cote, then spake Kjartan to Thorkel Whelp and Knut, said that they should ride no further; he said that the thief Thorolf should not have whereat to jeer, because I dare not ride on my way with a small company. Then saith Thorkel Whelp: Now shalt thou have thy way in this, that we ride no further; yet mayst thou rue it that we are not by thy side, if thou hast need of men to-day. Then spake Kjartan: Bolli my kinsman may not join in rede for my bane; and if those sons of Osvif lie in wait for me, it hath not yet been seen

which of us shall live to tell the tale of our meeting, though there be some odds against me. After this ride those brethren westaway; but Kjartan rideth south along the dale; and there were two with him, to wit, An the Black and Thorarin.

Chapter 49

Thorkel hight a bonder; he dwelt at Goatcrags in Swinedale; it is now waste land there. He had fared to his horses that day, and his shepherd with him. They saw both of them the men of Bathstead lying in wait, and then Kjartan's company, as they rode three in all south along the dale. Then spake the shepherd that they should turn to meet Kjartan therewith; great good hap would be theirs, said he, if they might prevent so mickle trouble as was then toward. Thorkel spake : Hold thy peace, and that quickly; thou born fool, thou mayst not give life to any man if his bane be set. This too is sooth, that I in nowise grudge that they should do one to another as much ill as it liketh them; methinks this is the better rede, that we come near thereto, whereas we may best see the meeting, and so have sport of their dealings, yet ourselves run no risk. For all men allow that Kjartan is the best of all fighting men; it seemeth like to me that he will need to be, since it is known to us that great are the odds against him here. And Thorkel had his way. Now Kjartan and his folk rode on to Goat-gill. Then those sons of Osvif have a deeming that Bolli had set himself where he might well see if men ride from the west. They took now their rede; themseemed that Bolli might play them false: they go up the brent to him and grappled him as it were in wrestling and drew him by the feet down the brent. Soon thereafter came Kjartan, for they were riding swiftly. When Kjartan's folk came south across the gill, then saw he the ambush, and knew the men, and sprang straightway from his horse and turned to meet those sons of Osvif. Thereby stood a mickle stone ; here Kjartan bade that they should hold their ground. But before they came together, Kjartan drave with a spear, and smote the shield of Thorolf above the handlestrap, and bare down the shield on him; and the spear past through the shield and the arm above the elbow, and therewith sundered the great muscle; then Thorolf let drop the shield, and his arm was useless to him all that day. Afterward Kjartan drew his sword; and he had not as then King's-loom. Those brethren the sons of Thorhalla ran on Thorarin: he was a big man and a strong, and they too were right deft men: not easy was it to see which of them should get the better of the other. Then set the sons of Osvif on Kjartan, and Gudlaug with them; they were six, but Kjartan and An two. An warded him well, and would ever be going out before Kjartan. Bolli stood by with Footbiter. Kjartan hewed hard, but the sword bit ill: he must always be straightening it under his foot. On both sides were men wounded, the sons of Osvif and An, but Kjartan had as yet no wound. Kjartan fought so fiercely and valiantly that the sons of Osvif gave back, and turned therewith whereas An was. Then fell An, and he had so fought for a space, that his guts hung out. In that onset Kjartan hewed the leg from Gudlaug above the knee, and that hurt was his bane. Then the sons of Osvif, four of them, set on Kjartan, and he warded him so valiantly that never fared he backward before them. Then spake Kjartan: Bolli kinsman, why faredst thou from home, if thou wilt stand by in peace? And it is now to be looked for that thou shouldst give aid to one of the two sides, and try yet how biteth Footbiter. Bolli made as if he heard not. But when Ospak saw that they might not prevail against Kjartan, then eggeth he Bolli in all wise: he might not will, said he, to have such shame follow him as to have plighted himself to share in that onset, and now to hold not to it: and Kjartan was heavy then in his dealings with us, when we had done nought of like greatness to him; and if Kjartan shall now escape from our hands, soon will there be for thee, Bolli, even as for us, mischief afoot. Then Bolli drew Footbiter, and turned on Kjartan. Then spake Kjartan to Bolli: Surely thou art minded now to do nithings-work; but far better do I deem it to take the word of bane from thee, kinsman, than to give it to thee. Then Kjartan cast away his weapon, and would not ward himself; and yet was he little wounded, but exceeding fight-weary. No answer made Bolli to the words of Kjartan, but yet he gave him his bane-wound. Straightway Bolli put himself beneath the other's shoulders, and Kjartan died on the knees of Bolli. Bolli straightway rued him of the deed, and gave out the slaying as his work. Then

Bolli sendeth the sons of Osvif into the township, but himself with Thorarin abode by the dead. J But when those sons of Osvif came to Bathstead and told the tidings, Gudrun made good cheer thereover; then was the arm of Thorolf bound up; it healed slowly and was of no avail ever after. The body of Kjartan was borne to Tongue. There after rode Bolli home to Bath-stead. Gudrun came to meet him and asked him how the time had sped. Bolli said it was nigh noon. Spake Gudrun: Mickle prowess hath been done; I have spun yarn for twelve ells, and thou hast slain Kjartan. Then saith Bolli: Yet may that illhap pass slowly from my heart, though thou mind me not thereof. Gudrun spake: I reckon not such with ill haps; methought thou hadst more honour that winter when Kjartan was in Norway, and now hath he trodden you under foot from the time that he came out to Iceland; and that tell I last which I deem of most worth, that Hrefna shall not go laughing to bed this night. Then saith Bolli, and was sore wroth: Unsure I deem it that she pales more than thou at these tidings; and methinks it like that thou wouldst be less moved, though I were left lying on the fight-meads, and Kjartan told thee of the tidings. Gudrun marked that Bolli grew wroth, and then she spake: Make no such words, quoth she, for I can thee much thank for that work; now meseems I know this, that thou wilt not do aught against my will. Afterward went the sons of Osvif into that earthhouse which had been privily made for them ; but the sons of Thorhalla were sent to Holy fell, to tell the tidings to Snorri the priest; and this therewith, that they should bid him give them some speedy aid against Olaf and those men who would follow up the bloodsuit for Kjartan. Now it came to pass at Saelings-dale-Tongue the same night after the day wherein the slaying had been done, that An sat up, whom all men thought to be dead; they were afeared that waked the bodies, and mickle wonder that seemed to them. Then spake An to them: I bid you in God’s name that ye fear not me; for I have lived all this time, and have had all my wits until within this hour; but now came over me the heaviness of a swoon. Then I dreamed of that same wife as last night, and methought she took the small wood out of my belly, and let the guts come in place thereof, and good was the change for me. Then were those wounds bound up that An had, and he grew whole, and was called afterward An Copsebelly. But when Olaf Hoskuldson heard these tidings, he was sore grieved for the slaying of Kjartan, and yet he bare him in manly wise; but his sons would fare straightway against Bolli and slay him. Then spake Olaf: That shall in nowise be; no boot would it be to me for my son though Bolli were slain. And albeit I loved Kjartan beyond all other men, yet I would not that any hurt should come to Bolli. But I see a befitting errand for you; do ye fare against the sons of Thorhalla Wordy, for I have learned that they have been sent to Holyfell to summon a host to the sons of Osvif: well were it methinks that ye should deal them such wife as it likes you. Then those sons of Olaf made them ready to fare, and went to the ferry that Olaf had ; and they were four in all. They rowed out along Hvammsfirth, and seek forth on their way eagerly. They have light wind and fair weather, and row under sail till they come under Score-isle, and there abide they awhile, and ask tidings of the faring of men. Then see they a ship row eastwards over the Firth: soon knew they the men, that there were those sons of Thorhalla; thereupon Halldor and his folk lay them aboard: and there was no withstanding them, for the sons of Olaf leapt straightway out on the ship at Odd’s men; Stein and his brother were taken with hands and hewed over the gunwale. Those sons of Olaf turn back and their journey was deemed right glorious.

Chapter 50

Olaf fared to meet the body of his son : he sendeth men south to Burg to tell these tidings to Thorstein Egilson, and this withal, that he would have aid of him in the bloodsuit for Kjartan, if a great host came against him with the sons of Osvif; but he makes it known that he will have the whole matter left in his hands. The like word sends he north to Willowdale to Gudmund his son-in-law, and the sons of Asgeir ; and this therewith, that he declared the slaying at the hands of all those men who had been at the onset, save Ospak the son of Osvif, and he was outlawed already on account of the woman hight Aldis, who was sister to Holmgang-Ljot of Ingjaldsand. Their son was Ulf, who was afterward marshal to Harald the king, Sigurdson; he wedded Jorun, daughter of Thorberg; their son was Jon, father of

Erlend Laggard, the father of Eystein the archbishop. Olaf had given out the bloodsuit for the Thorsness Thing. He let flit home the body of Kjartan, and tilt it over, because as then was there no church in the Dales. And when Olaf learned that Thorstein had bestirred him speedily, and had gathered a great company, and the Willowdalers in like wise, then let Olaf summon to him men from all the Dales; a mickle company was that. Then sendeth Olaf all that host to Bathstead, and spake thus : This is my will, that ye ward Bolli, if need be, no worse than ye follow me; for that is near my mind, that those outcountry-men who shall now soon come to hand for us may deem that they have got somewhat less than their due. And so fared they forthwith. Thereafter came the Willowdalers and were wood wroth: Hall son of Gudmund and Kalf son of Asgeir most egged them on to set on Bolli, and to seek for the sons of Osvif till they were met with; in nowise, they said, could they have departed out of that countryside. But whereas Olaf straitly letted them from faring, an agreement was made betwixt them ; easy was that with Bolli, in that he bade Olaf rule his part of the case wholly. But Osvif saw no means of gainsaying it, since no host came to him from Snorri. Then was appointed a meeting for atonement at Leashaws. The whole suit came undivided into Olaf's hands; boot should be given for the slaying of Kjartan as Olaf would, both in goods and the outlawry of men. Bolli came not to the meeting, and Olaf had his way. The award should be given at Thorsness Thing; then was the meeting sundered. The Willowdalers and Miremen ride to Herdholt. Thorstein Kuggison asked for Asgeir to foster, for the comforting of Hrefna. But Hrefna fared north with her brethren and was much deaved with sorrow: and yet she bare herself bravely, for she was easy of speech with every man. Hrefna took no man after Kjartan, and lived but a little while after she came north. And this is the saying of men, that she was brokenhearted from her grief for Kjartan.

Chapter 51

The body of Kjartan lay openly for a week at Herd-holt. Thorstein Egilson had let build a church at Burg: he flitted home with him the body of Kjartan, and Kjartan was buried at Burg: the church was then new-hallowed and yet drest in white. So wore the time till Thorsness Thing. The case was given against all the sons of Osvif, and they were all outlawed: mickle fee was given to the end that they might fare abroad, but none of them should return while any son of Olaf, or Asgeir son of Kjartan should be alive: the fall of Gudlaug, Osvif's sister's son, should be unatoned, because of the onset and the. lying in wait for Kjartan; and no recompense was awarded to Thorolf for the wound he had gotten. Olaf would not suffer Bolli to be made outlaw, and would that he should pay a price for himself; that liked Halldor and Stein-thor right ill, and in like wise the other sons of Olaf; they said it might prove a heavy matter and a bad bargain if Bolli were to abide in the same countryside as they. Olaf said that they must hearken to him while he was afoot. A ship was then at anchor in Bearhaven; Audun Rope-tike was owner thereof. He stood up and spake: It cannot be gainsaid that the outlawry of these men will be no less in Norway while Kjartan's friends live. Then spake Osvif: Thou, Rope-cur, mayst be no true seer herein, for my sons shall be of mickle worth with men of mark, but thou shalt fare to the trolls' hands this summer. Audun Rope-tike fared out that summer, and his ship was wrecked on the Sheepisles and every man's son aboard her was lost. Men deemed that what Osvif had foretold concerning Audun Rope-tike had been fully accomplished. The sons of Osvif fared out that summer, and no one of them ever came back after; so ended the bloodsuit, but Olaf was deemed to have waxed thereby, because where most the guilt was he pushed matters to the uttermost, to wit against Osvif's sons, but spared Bolli for his kinship's sake. Olaf gave good thank to all those men whom he had bidden to his aid. Bolli bought land at Sselingsdale-Tongue by the rede of Olaf. That is said of all men, that Olaf lived three winters after the slaying of Kjartan. But when he was past away those brethren shared the heritage after him: Halldor took the homestead at Herdholt. Thorgerd Egil's daughter abode with Halldor, and was full of bitter enmity to Bolli, and deemed that sore was her reward for his fostering.

Chapter 52

Now Bolli and Gudrun stablished their household in the spring at Sselingsdale-Tongue, and soon rose that house right high. Bolli and Gudrun gat a son ; to that lad a name was given, and he was called Thorleik ; he was the comeliest of lads. Halldor Olafson dwelt at Herdholt as is aforewrit, and he was much the chief of those brethren. The same spring as Kjartan was slain did Thorgerd the goodwife take board for a lad of her kin with Thorkel at Goatcrags. The lad watched the sheep that summer; to him as to others was the death of Kjartan much grievous. He might never tell of Kjartan if Thorkel were by, because he ever spake ill of Kjartan; he said that he was a whitelivered man and of small courage, and mocked at him continually, showing how he had borne him when stricken. The lad took that ill, and fareth to Herdholt, and tells it to Halldor and Thorgerd, and bade them take him in. Thorgerd bade him abide where he was until winter. The lad said that he had not the might to be there longer: and that wouldst thou not bid me to do, didst thou wot how mickle grief I have hereof. Then rose the mood of Thorgerd at the tale of his trouble, and she said that she might suffer him to lodge with them for her part. Then answereth Halldor; he bade her pay no heed to such; the lad, said he, was reckless in his words. Then said Thorgerd : Of little worth is the lad; but in any case Thorkel hath done ill herein, because he knew of the trap which the Bathstead men set for Kjartan, and would not tell him of it, but made game and sport of their dealings together, and hath since laid thereto unfriendly words. Far will it be from you brethren, saith she, that ye will seek vengeance where the odds are against you, if ye cannot reward for his doings such a fool of a man as is Thorkel. Halldor answered little thereto, but bade Thorgerd look to the youngling’s lodging. A few days thereafter rides Halldor from home, and some men of his with him: he fares till he comes to Goatcrags, and took the house of Thorkel over him. Thorkel was led out before the door and slain : he met his death like a dastard. Halldor suffered no spoiling there, and fared homeward thereafter. Thorgerd made good cheer at this, and thought that this reminder was better than none. That summer was all at peace, so to say, and yet ill blood was there betwixt the sons of Olaf and Bolli: those brethren bore them most unyieldingly toward Bolli, but he yielded to his kinsmen in "all things whereby he did himself no hurt: for he was the greatest of champions. Bolli had at most times a great company, and held him after the wise of a mighty man, inasmuch as he had no lack of wealth, Steinthor Olafson dwelt at this time at Dane-steads in Laxwaterdale: he had to wife Thurid Asgeir’s daughter, who had been aforetime wedded to Thorstein Kuggi. Their son was Steinthor, who was called Cock-paddle.

Chapter 53

The next winter after the death of Olaf Hoskuld-son, when Halldor dwelt at Herdholt, it is told that as the winter wore to an end, then sendeth Thorgerd word to Steinthor her son that he should come to meet her. And when the mother and son met together, she saith to him her mind, that she will fare westward from home to Saurby to visit Aud her kinswoman; she saith also that Halldor shall fare with her: they were five in all when they fared from home. Halldor followed his mother. Now fare they until they come to Saelingsdale and in front of the homestead at Tongue. Then Thorgerd turned her horse toward the stead and asked: How hight that stead? Then saith Halldor, and smiled therewith : That stead hight Tongue. Who dwelleth here? saith she. Then answers Halldor: This thou askest, mother, not because thou wottest it not. Then saith Thorgerd, and snorted therewith: I wot of a surety, quoth she, that here dwelleth Bolli, the banesman of your brother. And wondrous unlike are ye to your renowned kinsfolk in that ye will not avenge a brother such as was Kjartan; thus would not do Egil your mother’s father, and it is ill, quoth she, to have dastards for sons; and surely I deem, quoth she, that it had been better had ye been daughters of your father and been given in marriage. Here is it, Halldor, even as saith the saw: One fool in every stock; and herein is the evil luck of Olaf plainly shown to me, that he made so bad a business in the getting of sons. I have said this to thee, Halldor, for this cause, that thou art held to be by far the first of you brethren. Now may we turn back here, quoth

she. This was mine errand, to mind you of this, if so be ye minded it not before. Then saith Halldor: We cannot wite thee for it, mother, quoth he, if this pass speedily from our minds. He answereth little therewith, but he waxed exceeding wroth at her speech. And now after this they turn backward in their wayfaring, and stay not before that they come to Herdholt. Now wears the winter; and when the summer is come and time wears to the Thing, Halldor giveth out that he will ride to the Thing that summer, and his brethren with him. Those brethren ride with a great company; then tilt they the booth that Olaf had owned. That Thing was quiet and without tidings. Those Willow-dalers came southward to the Thing, the sons of Gud-mund Solmundson. Bardi Gudmundson was then eighteen winters old, and was a mickle man and stark. The sons of Olaf bade Bardi their kinsman home with them, and urged him thereto with many words. Hall Gudmundson was then out of the land. Bardi took the bidding well, for there was much love betwixt those kinsmen. Now rideth Bardi westward from the Thing with those brethren. The sons of Olaf ride home to Herdholt: Bardi is there through the summer.

Chapter 54

Now saith Halldor privily to Bardi, that he and his brethren are minded to fare against Bolli; he said that they could no longer thole the tauntings of their mother. It is not to be hidden, kinsman Bardi, quoth he, that this had much to do with our guesting of thee, that we would have hereto thy helpfulness and comradeship. Then saith Bardi: Ill may that be spoken of, to break the peace between kinsmen. And for another thing, Bolli methinks will be hard to deal with : he hath many men about him, and himself is the doughtiest of men: there too is no lack of wise counsel whereas those two be, Osvif and Gudrun : meseems that it will be no easy matter to overcome all this. Halldor answereth: Our need is of one who will not worsen the case for us: not for that have I brought it up; but this thing must go forward, that we may seek to avenge us on Bolli. I hope moreover, kinsman, that thou wilt not sunder thyself from taking part with us in this wayfaring. Bardi saith: I wot that thou deemest it unlike that I should hang back from the journey ; nor may I do so if I see that I cannot let you thereof. Now hast thou spoken well herein, saith Halldor, as was like to be. Bardi saith that they must betake them to redes concerning the faring. Halldor saith that he has learned that Bolli has sent his men away from home, some north to Ramfirth to a ship, and some out to the Strands. That is told me also, that Bolli is at the fell-cot in Saelingsdale; no men are there save the housecarles who are about the haysel: meseems no fairer time may be found to seek a meeting with Bolli than now. This then is agreed betwixt Halldor and Bardi. There was a man hight Thorstein the Black: he dwelt in Hounddale in the Broadfirthdales; he was a wise man and well to do: he had been a dear friend to Olaf Peacock; A sister of Thorstein hight Solveig: she was given in marriage to the man hight Helgi Hardbeinson: he was a mickle man and a doughty : he was a mickle faring-man : he was newly come home from his faring, and was at guesting with Thorstein his wife’s brother. Halldor sendeth word to Thorstein and to Helgi his sister’s husband; they come to Herdholt; then saith Halldor to Thorstein all this rede, and bade him fare with them. Thorstein spake ill of this that they had in mind: It is the greatest scathe if ye kinsmen slay each the other continually : even now are such men as is Bolli few in your kindreds. But though Thorstein spake thus, he availed nothing. Halldor sent word to Lambi his father’s brother; and when they met he telleth him of his purpose. Lambi was very eager that the business should go forward. Thorgerd the housewife also whetted them much that this journey should be undertaken : never, said she, might Kjartan be avenged save it were on Bolli. After this they made ready for the wayfaring; there were in the journey four brethren, Halldor and Steinthor, Helgi and Hoskuld : the fifth man was Bardi Gudmundson, the sixth Lambi, the seventh Thorstein the Black; the eighth was Helgi Hardbeinson his sister’s husband,the ninth An Copsebelly. Thorgerd the housewife went a-faring with her sons. They letted this somewhat; such faring, said they, was not for women. Thorgerd said that of ^ surety she should go : That know I right well, quoth she, of you my sons, that ye need egging on. They said that she must have her way.

Chapter 55

After this they ride away from Herdholt nine together; Thorgerd was the tenth. They ride along the beaches northward to Leashaws; that was at the oncoming of night. They stay not now their faring till that they come to Saelingsdale; by then was the dawn breaking. The wood was thick in the dale. Bolli was there in the fell-cot, even as Halldor had learned. The cot stood by a stream, where it is since called Bolli’s Tofts. A mickle holt runs above the fell-cot and down to Stack Gill. Betwixt the hill-slope and the holt is a mickle meadow which hight Brim; there were the housecarles of Bolli at work. Halldor and his fellows rode to Oxdike over Ranmeads, and up to the place called Hammer-meadow ; that is over against the cot. They were aware that many men were in the cot; they dismounted and were minded to abide until men went from the cot to their work. The shepherd of Bolli fared to his flock early in the morning up the hillside. He saw men in the wood, and likewise horses, which were tied in the ditch; he misdoubts that those men will be on no peaceful errand that fared so privily: thereon he makes for the cot by the straightest way, and is minded to tell Bolli of the coming of those men. Halldor Olafson was the keenest-eyed of all men: he sees that a man is coming down the hillside and back to the cot: he saith to his fellows that this must be the shepherd of Bolli: And he will have seen our faring: and now must we cut him off and suffer him not to bring news to the cot. So did those fellows of his as he bade them. An Copsebelly was the fleetest of that fellowship: and he overtakes the shepherd: he catcheth him by the arm and forceth him down. The lad fell in such wise that his back was broken asunder. Afterward rode they to the fell-cot. The cot was twofold : there was a sleeping hut and a bower. Bolli had been afoot early in the morning and given orders about the work, but then laid him down to sleep when his housecarles had fared forth; they two were alone in the cot, Bolli and Gudrun. They awoke with the din as the others leapt from horseback: they heard them talking over this, to wit, who should first go into the fell-cot against Bolli. Bolli knew the voice of Halldor and of many of his fellows. Then spake Bolli to Gudrun, and bade her go forth from the cot; he said that the meeting with those men is like to be one which it will be no sport for her to look on. Gudrun answers: her mind was, quoth she, that only such tidings would come to pass there as she might well look on; no harm, she said, might come to Bolli though she were standing nigh him. Bolli said that he must rule herein. And so it was, that Gudrun went out of the fell-cot and up the brent to the beck that fell theredown, and set to washing her linen. Bolli was now alone in the cot. He took his weapons, put a helm on his head; he had a shield before him, Footbiter in his hand; no byrny had he. Now Halldor and his fellows take rede among them which shall set on, because none was eager to go into the cot. Then spake An Copsebelly: There are men here a-faring, quoth he, who were more nearly bound by kinship to Kjartan than I; but none that may be more mindful of that onset when Kjartan was slain: that was in my heart when I was borne back to Tongue scarce alive, but Kjartan dead, that I would gladly do Bolli a hurt if so I might: I shall go first into the cot. Then spake Thorstein the Black: Valiantly is this spoken; but yet is it more redeful not to be over hasty in counsel; let men fare warily, because Bolli will not abide in peace when an onset is made upon him. Now though the odds against him be great, yet it is like that ye will have a stout defence to deal with, for Bolli is both stark and a nimble fighter, and he hath that sword which hath not its like among weapons. After this goeth in An hard and swiftly, and held his shield over his head, and pushed the narrow side forward. Bolli hewed at him with Footbiter, and smote on the shield-edge; therewith he clave An down to the shoulders: straightway gat he his bane. Afterward went in Lambi: he held a target before him, and a sword drawn in his hand. In that nick of time was Bolli pulling his sword out of the wound, and swerved his shield aside. Then Lambi smote Bolli on the thigh, and a mickle wound was that. Bolli hewed back,and that stroke lit on the shoulder, and the sword rent down along the side; he was straightway put out of the fight. Never afterward so long as he lived was his arm without pain. Meanwhile went in Helgi Hardbeinson and had in his hand a barbed spear; the feather thereof was an ell long, and the shaft was bound with iron. And when Bolli sees that, then casteth he down his sword, and took his shield in both hands, and went to the door of the cot against Helgi. Helgi smote Bolli with the spear right through the

shield and his body. Then leaned Bolli against the wall of the cot. Now thrust they into the cot, Halldor and his brethren; Thorgerd also went in. Then took up Bolli the word: That is now the rede of you brethren, to come nearer than heretofore; he said moreover that it was like his defence should be a short one. Thorgerd answereth his speech; she said that it needed not to spare to finish the work unyieldingly with Bolli; she bade them pass at ween neck and head. Bolli yet stood against the wall, and held his kirtle to him lest the guts should fall out. Then leapt Steinthor Olafson at Bolli, and hewed at him with a great axe; the blow smote the neck by the shoulders and the head flew off straightway. Thorgerd bade him good luck of his hands; now, said she, Gudrun should have a bloody poll to comb for Bolli awhile. Now go they out of the fell-cot; but Gudrun cometh down from the water to speak with Halldor, and asks what had betid in the encounter betwixt them and Bolli. They say even as it was. Gudrun was so arrayed that she was clad in a stuff kirtle, and had a bodice of web fitting closely; a mickle coif on her head; she had knotted a scarf round her; blue lines were done thereon, and the ends were fringed. Helgi Hardbeinson went to Gudrun and took the end of the scarf, and wiped the blood off his spear, that same wherewith he had thrust Bolli through. Gudrun looked at him and smiled. Then spake Halldor, and said that this was grimly done and unmanly. Helgi bade him grieve not at that; because methinks, quoth he, that under this scarf end abides he that shall be my life's bane. Then take they their horses and ride away. Gudrun went along the way with them and talked therewith for a space; afterward turned she back.

Chapter 56

So spake the fellows of Halldor, that Gudrun thought lightly of the death of Bolli, since she fell to talk with them as they went, and in all her dealings with them behaved as if they had not done aught which was misliking to her. Then answereth Halldor: That is not my mind, that Gudrun thought lightly of the death of Bolli: I deem that she rather entered into speech with us by the way that she might clearly mark which men were in the journey : this also is not overmuch to say, that Gudrun is far beyond other women in all high-heartedness: and it is the more like to be that Gudrun takes much to heart the slaying of Bolli, because this is truth to tell, that the loss of such a man as was Bolli is the most scathe that may be, though we kinsmen had not the good luck to agree together. Now ride Halldor and his company back to Herdholt. Now these tidings became known far and wide, and were thought much of: men grieved much for Bolli's death. Gudrun sendeth men straightway unto Snorri the Priest, for she and Osvif deemed that all their trust lay whereas Snorri was. Snorri started off quickly at the wordsending of Gudrun, and came in to Tongue with sixty men. Gudrun was fain of the coming of Snorri: he offered to seek for atonement. Gudrun said it was little to her mind to yeasay the taking of goods on behalf of Thorleik for the slaying of Bolli. Meseems thou, Snorri, quoth Gudrun, mayest best give me aid if thou change steads with me, so that I abide not in the same township as the men of Herdholt. At that time had Snorri much ill dealing with the Ere-dwellers. Snorri said that he would do this for his friendship sake with Gudrun, but, said he, Gudrun must go on dwelling at Tongue for that season. Now Snorri makes ready to depart. Gudrun gave him worthy gifts. Now rideth Snorri until that he cometh home, and all was so to say peace. The next winter after the slaying of Bolli bare Gudrun a child ; that was a manchild; she called him after Bolli: the lad was early mickle and fair, and Gudrun loved him well. And when that winter is worn, and the spring comes, then that exchange went forward as had been agreed upon, that they should exchange their lands, Snorri and Gudrun: Snorri moved to Saelingsdale-Tongue, and abode there till the day of his death. Gudrun fared then to Holy fell, and Osvif likewise: and they stablish there a bounteous household; there wax up her sons Thorleik and Bolli. Now Thorleik was of four winters whenas Bolli was slain.

Chapter 57

A man hight Thorgils, and was known after his mother and called Hallason: he dwelt in Horddale at the stead hight Tongue: his father was Snorri, son of Alf-a-dales. Halla the mother of Thorgils was daughter to Guest Oddleifson. Thorgils was a mickle man and fair, and the greatest of braggarts: he was nowise called a man of even dealings; most commonly he was somewhat at variance with Snorri the Priest: Snorri held Thorgils to be a busybody, and much given to finery. Thorgils made many errands for himself westaway in the countrysides; he was ever coming to Holyfell, and put himself forward to be steward for Gudrun. She answered him well by seeming, but made light of the matter altogether. Thorgils would have her son Thorleik home with him, and he was a long time at Tongue, and learned law of Thorgils; for he was a man most wise in the laws. At that time was Thorkel Eyjolfson a seafarer. He was a most notable man and of great kin: he was a mickle friend to Snorri the Priest: he abode ever with Thorstein Kuggison whiles he was out in Iceland. And once, when Thorkel had a ship lying up at the Shallows on Bardistrand, it came to pass in Burg-firth that the son of Eid Skeggison of Ridge was slain by the sons of Helga of Kroppi. He who had been the slayer hight Grim: his brother hight Njal; he was drowned a little after in Whitewater. Grim was outlawed and made a wood-abider for the slaying; Grim lay out on the fells while he was in outlawry: he was a mickle man and stark. Eid was then much aged, when this came to pass; wherefore this matter was not followed up. Men laid much wite on Thorkel Eyjolfson in that he drave not home these rights in some fashion, such a man of war as he was, and so bounden by kinship to Eid. In the summer, when Thorkel had made his ship ready, he fared south over Broadfirth; he gets him a horse there, and thereafter rides alone south to Burgfirth: he lets not his journey till that he comes to Ridge, to the house of Eid his kinsman. Eid gave him good welcome. Then Thorkel tells him what his errand is, to wit, that he would seek a meeting with Grim, the wood-abider. Then asks Thorkel if Eid knoweth aught of where his lair may be. Eid answers: I am not fain that thou fare on this journey; methinks, kinsman, quoth he, that there is much risk as to how the journey may end, when thou hast to do with a man of hell such as is Grim; but if thou wilt nought for it but to fare forth, then will I that thou fare with many men, and have the whole matter in thine own hand. I deem that would be nowise brave, saith Thorkel, to set on one man with an overpowering host; but I will that thou lend me thy sword Skofnung; then it is like that I may get the better of a single vagabond, though he be somewhat well knit. Thou must have thy way herein, quoth Eid; but it will not come on me unawares though thou rue this rashness some time or other. But as thou art minded to do this for my sake, I shall not deny thee what thou askest; because methinks Skofnung is well bestowed if thou bear him. But such is the nature of the sword, that the sun must not shine on his hilts, and he may not be drawn if so be women are by. But if a man be hurt with the sword, that hurt may not be healed, save the lifestone that goes with it be rubbed thereon. Thorkel said that he would keep careful watch on it. Now takes he Skofnung to him, and bade Eid tell him the road to where Grim had his lair. Eid said that he thought it most like that Grim had his lair north on Two-days-heath by Fishmeres. Afterward rideth Thorkel north over the heaths on the way which Eid had shown him. He rides north over the heath a very long time, until he sees a hut beside a mere; and he turneth thither.

Chapter 58

And when he cometh to the hut, he seeth how a man sat by the waterside at the mouth of a burn, and drew out fish: he had a cloak over his head. Now Thorkel lights off his horse, and bindeth him by the hut wall; then he goes forth to the water whereas the man was sitting. Now Grim sees the shadow of the man, as it was thrown upon the water; then he springeth up swiftly. By this is Thorkel come nigh to him, and heweth at him; the blow smote the arm above the wrist, and that was no great wound. Grim ran straightway upon Thorkel, and they fall to wrestling. Soon were seen the odds of strength, and Thorkel falleth with Grim upon him. Then asks Grim what man may this be. Thorkel answereth; he

said that it was no matter. Grim said that things had turned out otherwise than as Thorkel would have them : himseemed, said he, that his life was in his hand. Thorkel said that he might in nowise ask for peace: he said that the venture had proved a luckless one. Grim said that he had unhaps enow, though this one pass over : another lot may be appointed thee than to lose thy life at our meeting. I will give thee thy life, and do thou pay me back even as thou hast manhood thereto. Now standeth up Grim and the twain of them, and they go home to the hut. Thorkel sees that the flow of blood was making Grim weary. Then takes he Skofnung's stone, and rubs it, and binds it on the arm of Grim; straightway all the throbbing and swelling left the arm. There abode they that night. In the morning Thorkel makes ready to get him gone, and asks Grim if he will fare with him: he saith that assuredly he will do so. Thorkel now turns westward and goes not to meet with Eid his kinsman. Thorkel letteth not his journey until he comes to Saelingsdale-Tongue. Snorri the Priest greeteth him with much blitheness. Thorkel telleth him how his faring had taken an ill turn for him. Snorri said that it was well: Grim looketh to me a lucky man. I will that thou quit thee of him right well: this were now my rede, friend, that thou leave thy seafaring and stablish thyself and take a wife and become a chieftain, as thou art of meet birth thereto. Thorkel said that oft had his rede proved wholesome for him, and asked what he had in mind as to the woman he should bid for. Snorri said that he should bid for that woman who was the best match, to wit, Gudrun Osvif's-daughter. Thorkel said it was true that this match was a worthy one; but me-thinks there is much against it, quoth he, in her overmuch pride and high temper; she will fain let avenge Bolli her husband. Thorgils Hallason seems also to be much in her counsels: also it may be that this will be not altogether to his mind; yet Gudrun likes me well. Spake Snorri: This may I promise thee, that no hurt shall come to thee of Thorgils': and methinks it is most like that somewhat may be done in the business of the avenging of Bolli before this season be worn. Thorkel answers: It may well be that this is no vain word that now thou tellest of: but for the avenging of Bolli, that looks to me no more like to come to pass now than aforetime, unless ye bring some of the great men into the affair. Then answereth Snorri: It likes me well that thou fare out yet again this summer, and let us see what comes about. And so they sunder. Now fared Thorkel west over Broadfirth to the Shallows: he fared out that summer, and flitted Grim along with him. Thorkel had a good voyage that summer,and made Norway southerly. Then spake Thorkel to Grim : Well known to thee is the cause whereby came about those chances that led to our fellowship: I need not rehearse that; but fain am I that it should end with less trouble than seemed like for a while : now I have held thee at all times for a valiant man; and for this cause I will so repay thee, as if I had never held wrath against thee in my heart; and I will give thee cheaping wares so mickle that thou mayest well join thyself to the fellowship of valiant men. But take not thy place here north in the land ; because the kinsmen of Eid are many in the cheap-farings, and they are wroth with thee in their hearts; but they are also my friends, and it becomes me not to back thee against them. Grim thanked Thorkel well for this word, and said that he might not have asked for so great things as Thorkel offered him. And at parting Thorkel gave to Grim good cheaping wares; many men gave out that this was full great-heartedly done. Afterward fared Grim to the Wick, and stablished himself there, and was held to be a mighty man of his hands. And here leaves the tale to tell of Grim. Thorkel Eyjolfson abode in Norway that winter.

Chapter 59

Gudrun Osvif's-daughter fared from home that summer at Twain-month and into the Dales. She rode to Thickshaw. Thorleik was mostly there or with the sons of Arnmod, Halldor and Ornolf, but at times was he with Thorgils at Tongue. That same night sendeth Gudrun a man to Snorri the Priest to bid him meet with her the next day. Snorri started speedily at this word-sending, and rode straightway with a single man thither till he came to Hawkdale-river. A knoll standeth on the north of the river, hight Head : at that place had Gudrun appointed that she and Snorri should meet together; it is in the land of Beckshaw. They came thither well-nigh at the same time : one man likewise followed Gudrun, and he was Bolli Bollison. He was then twelve winters old, and yet was he fully come both to his wit and

strength, so that there were many who won no more might though they were men grown. Snorri and Gudrun fell to talk. straightway; but Bolli and the fellow of Snorri sate on the knoll and spied the farings of men over the countryside. But when Gudrun and Snorri had learned the tidings of each other, then asked Snorri of her errand, what had newly come to pass that she sent him word so hastily. Gudrun spake: It is sooth that this matter is span-new to me, that I will now speak of, and yet it came to pass twelve winters since; for concerning the avenging, of Bolli must I take some rede. Of this thou also mayst not be unaware, because I have minded thee thereof at times; and this must I also put forward, that thou hast promised me some aid, if I abide with long-suffering: but now methinks the hope is sped that any will give heed to our cause: and now have I abided fully as long as I have heart thereto; and yet would I have of thee good rede how this avenging may come to pass. Snorri asketh what was most to her mind herein. Spake Gudrun: That is my will, that those sons of Olaf abide not long all hale. Snorri said that he banned this, that those men should be set on who were of most worship in the countryside, and are near akin to those who stand close to the avenging; but most needful is it that this race feud be done away. Gudrun spake : Then shall we fare against Lambi and slay him : and so is one dealt with who was most eager for ill. Then answereth Snorri: There is full cause as against Lambi; but I deem that Bolli will be no bettern avenged though he be slain; and such odds there are betwixt him and Bolli as will be of small avail in the award, if these slayings be ever set off the one against the other. Gudrun spake: It may well be that we shall never get on even terms with these Laxdalers : but someone shall now pay dear, in whatsoever dale he dwell. Now then will we turn thither whereas is Thorstein the Black: for none hath taken a worse part in these matters than he. Then answereth Snorri: So is it with Thorstein in your cause as with those men who were in the onset wherein Bolli was slain, but won not to him: But thou sufferest one to sit at peace through this areding, on whom methinks vengeance might be taken in fuller wise and who bare the bane-word on Bolli and that is Helgi Hardbeinson. Gudrun spake: True is that; but I may not know that those men will all sit at peace, at whose hands I have already gained increase of their foeship. Snorri spake : I see good rede thereto. Lambi and Thorstein shall be in the faring with thy sons, and for them this will fitly buy peace. And if they will not fare, then I may not well gainsay it that ye put upon them such wite as best liketh you. Gudrun spake: In what wise shall we fare to bring these men into the journey? Spake Snorri: That shall they see who shall be set over the wayfaring. Gudrun answereth : May we have thy foresight in this, who shall be over this journey? Then smiled Snorri and spake: Here hast thou chosen a man thereto. Gudrun answers : This thou wilt speak of Thorgils Hallason? Snorri said that so it was. Gud run spake : I have taken counsel hereof aforetime with Thorgils, and it is as good as come to nought: because he laid that one choice before me which I would not look on : for Thorgils hung not back from the avenging of Bolli, if he might have me to wife; but this is hopeless, and so I may not bid him to this wayfaring. Snorri spake : Hereto I may give thee rede; because I grudge not Thorgils this faring, and he shall of a surety have the promise of thee to wife; but yet let it be done with this undermeaning, that thou wilt be wedded to no other man in this land save Thorgils ; and that shall avail thee, since Thorkel Eyjolfson is not here in the land as now, and I have in mind this match for him. Gudrun spake : He will see through this guile. Snorri spake: See through it he will surely not: for Thorgils is more tried in recklessness than in wisdom. Make this agreement with few men as witnesses: let Halldor his foster-brother be by, but not Ornolf, because he is wiser; and lay it to my charge if things go not well. Thereafter Gudrun and Snorri stay their speech together, and bade one another farewell. Snorri rode home, but Gudrun to Thickshaw; she abides there that night. The morning after rideth Gudrun from Thickshaw, and with her are her two sons, Thorleik and Bolli. And as they rode out along Shawstrand, they see that men ride after them: those men soon overtake them. There was Thorgils Hallason.

Chapter 60

A few nights after Gudrun came home, she called her sons apart to her in her garth-close. And when they come thither, this see they: that there were spread certain linen clothes, a shirt, to wit, and breeches of linen. They were much bloody. Then spake Gudrun : These same clothes that here ye see cry out on you to avenge your father. Now will I not make many words hereover, because it is unlike that word-whetting would move you, if ye be not heartened by such reminders as this. The brethren were much stirred at this rede of Gudrun; but they spake after this wise, and said that they had been too young for the avenging and leader-less ; they knew nought, said they, how to take rede for themselves or for others: but we must needs be mindful of that we have lost. Gudrun said she thought that their minds were more set on horsefighting or sports. After that they parted. The night after they might not sleep, those sons of Gudrun. Thorgils was ware of that, and asked them what was amiss. They tell him of all their speech with their mother, and this therewith, that they might no longer, said they, bear their grief and the challenge of their mother: We will, quoth Bolli, seek to be avenged: now have we two brethren such strength that men may bring it against us if we take not the matter in hand. The day after they take counsel together, Thorgils and Gudrun. Gudrun thus began her tale: So meseems it, Thorgils, that my sons will not thus abide in peace any longer, that they seek not to be avenged for their father. But this hath most held us back hitherto, that methinks Thorleik and Bolli are too young to stand in a man's place in such a business; but there has not been up to now enough need to call thisto mind. Then answers Thorgils: Thou hast no rightto cast this in my teeth; for thou hast taken amiss the choice which I gave thee in this matter ; but I am of the same mind now as when we had speech of this before. If I may have thee to wife, I count it no great matter to stick either one or both the twain of those who had the most share in the slaying of Bolli. Gudrun spake; So meseems it, Thorgils, that Thorleik deemeth thus, that no man is so fit as thou to be the captain if some work needs doing which calls for hardihead. But it is not to be hidden from thee, that those lads are minded to set on Helgi the baresark, the son of Hardbein, who sits on his steading in Skorradale and feareth nought for himself. Thorgils spake: No whit reck Iwhether he be hight Helgi or another name : for I deem it is in nowise beyond my might to deal with Helgi or any other; and this business may be looked upon assettled if thou wilt pledge thyself before witnesses to bewedded to me if I come back from the avenging withthy sons. Gudrun said that she would fulfil all wheretoshe pledged herself though it were done with few men's witness, and, said she, it had best be done out of hand. Gudrun bade call thither Halldor his fosterbrother and her sons. Thorgils asked that Ornolf should also be by. Gudrun said that there was no. need for that: I misdoubt me more of the good faith of Ornolf toward thee than belike thou dost thyself. Thorgils bade her have it her way. Those brethren come in to Gudrun and Thorgils; there was Halldor also in speech with them. Now Gudrun tells them of the agreement, that Thorgils had promised her to be the leader in that wayfaring to seek an onset upon Helgi Hardbeinson along with my sons, for the avenging of Bolli. Thorgils hath made this bargain as regards the journeying, that he will that I be wedded to him. Now I give forth before you witnesses that I pledge myself to Thorgils to be wedded to no man in this land other than he, and I am not minded to be wedded in another land. To Thorgils it seems now that this may well be binding, and he saw not through it. Now end they this talk. This rede is now fully taken that Thorgils shall hold the rule as regards the faring. Thorgils now makes ready to depart from Holyfell, and Gudrun's sons with him. Now rides Thorgils east into the Dales, and so first to Tongue.

Chapter 61

The next Lord's-day thereafter was leet-day. Thorgils rode to the leet with his following. Snorri was not at the leet; a very great company was there. That day Thorgils came privily to speech of Thorstein the Black. It is as thou wottest, saith he, that thou wast in the onset with those sons of Olaf when Bolli Thorleik-son was slain; and thou hast made no boot in that matter to his sons. Now though it is long

since these things came to pass, yet methinks it has not past out of the memory of those who took part in that faring. Now those brethren deem that it would be least seemly for them to move aught against the sons of Olaf for their kinship's sake. Now it is the mind of those brethren to turn to avenging them on Helgi Hardbeinson, since he it was who dealt Bolli his bane-wound. Now will we offer thee this, Thorstein, that thou take part in this faring with these brethren and buy for thyself atonement therewith. Then answers Thorstein : This beseems me not, saith he, to deal in guileful redes against Helgi my sister's man: far liefer will I give mickle for my peace, so as it may be held full requital. Methinks those brethren are but little fain, said Thorgils, to do this for increase of goods. Moreover thou must not hide this from thyself, Thorstein, that thou hast here the choice of two things in thy hands, either to take part in this journey, or to endure the worst that may be so soon as they may bring it about. I would that thou shouldst take the first choice: though thou art bound to Helgi, yet must every man look to himself whenas he cometh into such straits. Then spake Thorstein: Shall such choice be given to others of them that are in the blood-suit against the sons of Bolli? Thorgils answers and says that Lambi must also choose in like manner. Thorstein said that he might think better of it if he should not stand alone in this business. Now Thorgils calleth Lambi to speech with him : he biddeth Thorstein hearken to their talk together. Then saith Thorgils: Of that same business will I take rede with thee, Lambi, as I have before done with Thorstein. What boot wilt thou make to the sons of Bolli for the bloodsuit that they have against thee? for this is told us in good sooth that thou didst smite Bolli. This too is against thee, that thou art sackbitten all the more in that thou didst egg on much that Bolli should be slain; yet thou hadst the most cause thereto next after the sons of Olaf. Then asks Lambi how he may make atonement. Thorgils saith that the same choice shall be given him as to Thorstein, to wit, that he should join in the faring with those brethren, whereas they were minded to seek for vengeance on Helgi Hardbeinson. Then answereth Lambi: Ill peace-price I deem that and unmanly: I am all uneager for this faring. Then spake Thorstein : No such simple matter is it, Lambi, to sunder thyself so quickly from the faring: because here are great men in the affair, and such as are of mickle worthy and they deem that they have long been set over a maimed lot. And it is told me of those sons of Bolli that they are right valiant men and full of masterfulness, and they have mickle to wreak. We may not be otherwise minded than to do somewhat to clear ourselves after so great a deed : men will also (quoth Thorstein) lay on my neck the more part of the wite on account or the ties that are between us twain and Helgi. So methinks is it the way with most men, that they let all go sooner than life; and that trouble is first to be felt that soonest cometh to hand. Spake Lambi: Plainly do I hear how thy wishes lie, Thorstein. I am well of mind also that thou shouldst rule herein if it seem so simple to thee; because long have we had mickle fellowship in trouble together. But this I will claim, if I yield herein, that those kinsmen of ours, the sons of Olaf, shall be in peace if the avenging goeth forward upon Helgi. Thorgils said he would yeasay that on the part of those brethren. Now this is agreed upon, that Thorstein and Lambi shall take rede for the faring with Thorgils. Now they bespake among them that they should come early on the third day-to Tongue in Horddale. After this they sundered their speech together. Now rideth Thorgils home that evening to Tongue. Now wears the time that Thorgils had bespoken, when those men should come to meet him that were minded to fare with him. On the third morning before sunrise came Thorstein and Lambi to Tongue, Thorgils greeteth them well.

Chapter 62

Now makes Thorgils ready to fare forth. And when he is boun then ride they up along Horddale and were ten in all: there was Thorgils Hallason the leader of the company. There were a-faring the sons of Bolli, Thorleik and Bolli: the fourth was Thord Cat their brother: the fifth Thorstein the. Black ; the sixth Lambi: the seventh and the eighth Halldor and Ornolf, foster-brethren of Thorgils; the ninth Svein; Hunbogi the tenth : these were sons of Alf-a-dales. These men were all the stoutest of fighting-men. Now ride they on their way up to Sweeping-scarth, and down Longwaterdale, and so athwart over Burgfirth. They ride to Isle-ford on Northriver,and to Bank-ford on Whiteriver, a little

way from By. Then ride they to Reekdale, and over the neck to Skorradale, and so up along the wood nigh to the homestead at Waterhorn. There they get off their horses; the evening was by then far spent. The home stead at Waterhorn stands a little way from the water on the south side of the river. Then Thorgils made known to his fellows that they must abide there that night: But I will fare unto the stead for news of what is toward, whether Helgi is at home at his steading or not So it is told me, that Helgi hath somewhat few men with him for the most part; but he is of all men most wary of himself, and sleepeth in a strong lock-bed. Those fellows of Thorgils said that they would trust in his foresight. Thorgils now makes a shift of clothes; he stript off the blue cape that he was wearing and put upon him a gray cowl: now fares he to the homestead, and when he is wellnigh come to the garth, then sees he how a man cometh over against him. And when they meet, then spake Thorgils: I may seem to thee, neighbour, to ask nought wisely (quoth he) whither in the countryside I am come; or now hight this stead, and who dwelleth here? He answers : Thou must be a wondrous foolish man and scant of wit if thou hast not heard tell of Helgi Hardbeinson, who dwelleth here at Water-horn. Helgi is the greatest of warriors and a man of might Then asks Thorgils whether Helgi is good at sheltering men unknown, if any such come to him, and those that need aid. He answers: Good is to be in sooth told thereof: for Helgi is the most valiant of men, both for the sheltering of men and for other highheartedness. Is Helgi now at home? saith Thorgils; I would fain bid him to shelter me. The man asks what was on his hands. Thorgils answers : I was outlawed this summer at the Thing; now would I win me the help of some man that is of mickle might: I would pledge him therefor my following and service. Now shalt thou take me to the homestead to meet with Helgi. Answers the other: Well may I do this, to come thither with thee, because thou hast claim to guesting nightlong ; but Helgi thou wilt not find, inasmuch as he is not at home. Thorgils asks, where then he may be. The man answers and says that he is at his fell-cot which hight Sarp. Thorgils asked what manner of men were there with him. He said that his son Hardbein and two men of the Southlands were there with him; men that were outlaws, to whom he had given shelter. Then spake Thorgils and bade him show him the readiest way to the fell-cot; for eager am I, quoth he, to meet with Helgi. The housecarle did as he bade. And when he had shown him the path, then sunder they. Thorgils turns straightway back to the wood and his fellows, and tells them how he has won knowledge of the doings of Helgi. Now must we abide here nightlong, and wend not to the fell-cot before morning. They now do according to his word. With morning Thorgils and his fellowship rode up along the woodside until they were come within a little way of the fell-cot. Then spake Thorgils that they should alight and eat the day-meal. So do they ; they get off their horses and tarry there awhile.

Chapter 63

Now is it to be told what betid in the fell-cot: Helgi was there, and those men with him as is aforesaid. He spake in the morning to his shepherd lad, that he should fare by the wood near the fell-cot and mark the farings of men or whatso he might see to tell of: Hard hath it gone with my dreams in the night, quoth he. The lad fared forth even as Helgi bade; and he was away awhile : and when he comes back, then asks Helgi if he hath seen aught new that is worthy the telling, great or small. The lad saith that he has seen that which he thinketh may be deemed tidings. Helgi asks what that may be. He said that he had seen men not right few, and methinks that they are not men of this countryside. Spake Helgi: Where were they when thou sawest them? or what were they about? or didst thou perchance mark aught of their array or their looks? The lad answers: I was not so wholly overcome with fear that I failed to mark such things ; because I knew that thou wouldst ask thereafter. Now saith he that they were but a short way from the fell-cot and they were then eating their day-meal. Helgi asks whether they were sitting in a ring or each one out from the other. He said that they were of a sooth sitting in a ring and on their saddles. Then spake Helgi: Now shalt thou tell me of their looks, for I would know if I may read from their likeness aught as to what men they be. Spake the lad: There sat a man on a stained saddle, and clad in a blue cape: mickle was he and right manly, bald over the brows, and his

teeth stood out somewhat. Helgi answers: This man know I easily from thy tale of him: there hast thou seen Thorgils Hailason from Horddale in the west-country: but what will that blusterer with us? The lad spake: Next to him sat a man on a gilded saddle ; he was clad in scarlet with a red kirtle, and had a gold ring on his hand, and a lace of gold knotted round his head. That man had golden hair, and it fell down all over his shoulders; he was bright-faced, with a knop on the nose, and the nose something snubbed at the end: very fair of eye, blue-eyed and keen-eyed, and somewhat shifty-eyed; broad of brow and full-cheeked, and wore his hair shorn across the forehead: he was well-grown about the shoulders and stout under the arm, and stark-armed; well-grown, and his whole bearing of the noblest: and in a word I have seen no man so starkly made in all wise. He was also a young man, so that his beard was not sprouted, and meseemed he was much swollen with grief. Helgi spake: Carefully hast thou marked this man, and of mickle worth must he be. I can not have seen this man, and yet may I guess who he is. So deem I that there hath been Bolli Bollison, because he is told of to me as the likeliest of men. Then spake the lad: Next sat a man on an enamelled saddle: he was in a golden-green kirtle, and had a mickle finger-ring of gold on his hand; that man was very fair to look on, and must yet be young in years: brown was the colour of his hair, and the hair fell right well, and in all wise was he the goodliest of men. Helgi saith : Methinks I wot who this man may be of whom thou hast now told; there must have been Thorleik Bollison. Thou art a sharp fellow and clear-sighted. There sat next a young man, saith he : he was in a blue kirtle and black breeks, and the kirtle was girt into the breeks: that man was straight-featured and white of hair, and well-made of face; slender and graceful of bearing. Then answers Helgi: That man may I have seen, as I think, and then will he have been a youngling. There must be Thord Thordson, the fosterling of Snorri the Priest. They have a well-dight company, these Westfirthers, saith Helgi; or what is yet to tell? Then spake the lad : There sat a mickle man on a Scots saddle: gray-bearded and very dark-browed, black of hair and scrub-haired, somewhat ill-looking, and yet doughty : he had over him a cloak of gray fell. Helgi saith: Plainly wot I who this man is, even Lambi Thorbjornson from Laxwaterdale westward ; but I know not how he comes to be in the fellowship of those brethren. Then spake the lad : Next sat a man on a pommelled saddle, and had uppermost a cowl of gray blue, and a silver ring on his hand; he was much like to a yeoman and somewhat stricken in years; his hair dark-brown and very curly; of good countenance, and had a scar on his face. Now worsens much thy tale, saith Helgi: there must thou have seen Thorstein the Black, my wife's brother: and in sooth I deem it wondrous that he should be in this company : I would not make such onset on him. What is there yet? The lad answers: Then sat two men; they were much alike in looks and should be men of middle age and of the stoutest: red of hair and their faces much freckled, and yet goodly to look on. Helgi spake: I wot who these men are: they are the sons of Arnmod from Thickshaw, the foster-brethren of Thorgils, Halldor and Ornolf; and thou art a keen-witted fellow. Or hast thou now told of all those men that thou sawest? Little may I now add thereto, quoth he; a man sat there and looked out of the ring of men; he was in a byrny of plate, and had a steel cap on his head, and its rim was a hand-breadth athwart: he had a gleaming axe on his shoulder and the edge of it might be an ell's length: that man was dark of face and black-eyed, and in all wise most like to a wicking. Helgi saith: This man know I clearly from thy tale of him: there hath been Hunbogi the Stark, the son of Alf-a-dales. And well deem I that I know what they will of me; but right picked men have they to their faring. Spake the lad: And yet sat there a man next to the stark man: he was black-brown of hair, thick-faced and red-faced, and mickle in the brows; a man of middle height. Helgi spake: Hereof needest thou say nought at greater length: there hath been Svein Alfson, brother to Hunbogi. And better will it be for us not to be redeless before these men: because this is much in my mind that they will be minded to come face to face with me before they depart from this countryside, and men are on this faring who would call our meeting a timely one though it had come to hand somewhat earlier. Now shall those queans who are here in the fell-cot put on carles' raiment, and take the horses that are here at the fell-cot, and ride their swiftest to the winter-house: it may be that those who are lying in wait for us will know not whether queans or carles are riding there : they may be. moved to give U a little breathing-space, until we may gather men to us, and then it is not sure

which may get the better. Now ride forth those queans, four together. Thorgils misdoubted him that news will have been borne of them to Helgi, and bade take horse and ride after them as speedily as might be; and so was it done. Now before they were mounted rode a man to them openly: he was small of growth and very quick of looks: he was exceeding restless-eyed and had a powerful horse. He greeted Thorgils Hallason as if he knew him; Thorgils asked the man his name and kindred, and also whence he was come. He said he night Hrapp, and was a Broad-firther by his mother's kin, and had waxed up there: he said he was called Slaying-Hrapp. He gave out that he had this with his name, that (quoth he) he was no craven though he were little of growth. Hrapp said that he was a Southlander by his father's kin, and gave out that he had dwelt there some winters. And again spake Hrapp: Well is that come to pass, that I have lighted upon thee here, Thorgils, since I was otherwise minded to seek to thee, though that were something harder to do; for I have trouble on my hands; I have had a misunderstanding with my good man. I gat from him dealings nowise good; and this have I with my name, that I will not endure such mockery from any man, and I made onset upon him; and yet methinks I smote him little or not at all; but short time abode I there to search thereafter, because I deemed myself the safer straightway when I bestrode this horse which I took from the goodman. Hrapp saith much, but asketh little, and yet was he soon ware that they were minded to call Helgi to account; he spake well thereof and said he trowed that they should find him but little arear.

Chapter 64

Thorgils and his fellows took to riding hard so soon as they came out of the wood, and saw now four men ride from the fell-cot, and they galloped very mightily : then spake some of the company of Thorgils that they should ride after them as speedily as might be. Then saith Thorleik Bollison: Let us rather go first to the fell-cot and see whatso of men be there : because I scarce deem that here be Helgi and his followers, for they look to me to be women. They were many that gainsaid him. Thorgils said that Thorleik should rule, inasmuch as he knew that he was the most farsighted of all men. Then they turn to the fell-cot. Hrapp leapt forth in front and brandished the spear-shaft that he held in his hand, and held it down before him, and said that now was the time fully come wherein he should be tried. Helgi and his fellows knew nought until Thorgils and his company take the fell-cot around them. Helgi's folk fasten the door and take up their weapons. Hrapp leaps straightway up on to the fell-cot, and asks whether Reynard be within. Helgi answers: This shall be brought home to thee, that he is something dangerous who dwells here within, and he will be able to bite not far from his earth. And therewith Helgi drave his spear at the window of the fell-cot and through Hrapp, and he fell dead straightway off the spear. Thorgils spake : The more haste the worse speed; he bade them then fare warily and guard against mishap: because we have strength more than enow to win Helgi in that pass to which he is come: for I deem that there are but few men before us. The cot was built with a single roof-beam which lay on the gables: the ends of the beam stood out beyond the gable walls; but the house was thatched with a single layer, and the thatch was not yet grown together. Then bade Thorgils that men should go to the beam-ends and pull on them so hard that the beam should break or the rafters part from the beam; and some he set before the door lest those within should break out. Few men were there in the fell-cot with Helgi: Hardbein his son was there, a lad twelve winters old, and two other men who were come to him that summer; the one hight Thorgils and the other Eyjolf. Thorstein the Black stood before the cot-door, and Svein, Alf-a-Dales'-son; but those other faring-fellows rove the roof from the cot, and thereto had they appointed men. Hunbogi the Stark and those sons of Arnmod took one end of the beam, and Thorgils and Lambi the other end: and they pull them so hard that the beam brake in the midst. And in that nick of time Hardbein thrust with a halberd from out of the cot, whereas the door was already broken : the thrust lighted on the steel-hood of Thorstein the Black so that it stood in the forehead, and that was a hurt very clear to see. Then spake Thorstein: Sooth is it that men are before us: and thereupon Helgi leapt out of the door so fiercely that those who stood nearest gave back. Thorgils was standing near by, and hewed at him with his sword, and that was a

mickle wound: the sword lit on his shoulder. Then Helgi turned upon him, and had in his hand a wood-axe. Helgi spake then: Yet shall the Ancient One dare to look upon weapons. Then flung he the axe at Thorgils, and it came on his foot and hurt him sore. And when Bolli saw this he leaps at Helgi, and had in his hand the sword Footbiter, and he drave it through him: that was Helgi's bane-wound. Those followers of Helgi, Thorgils and Eyjolf, leapt out of the bothy straightway after Helgi, and also Hardbein his son. Thorleik Bollison turned against Eyjolf; he was the starkest man. Thorleik heaved at him with an axe, and it came on his back and smote the man asunder in the midst. Thord Cat was standing near by when Hardbein leapt out, and would straightway deal with him. Bolli runs thither when he seeth this, and bade him do no scathe to Hardbein: No dastard's work shall be wrought here, quoth he: peace shall be given to Hardbein. Helgi had another son hight Skorri: he was at fostering at England in southern Reekdale.

Chapter 65

Now after this Thorgils and his fellowship ride away and over the neck to Reekdale, and there gave out these manslayings. Then they rode westward in the same fashion as they had ridden east: they stayed not their faring till they came to Tongue in Horddale, and tell now these tidings of what had been done in their journey. This wayfaring became much renowned: it was deemed to be a mickle deed in that they had slain such a champion as was Helgi. Thorgils thanketh men well for their wayfaring, and in like manner spake those brethren the sons of Bolli. Now sunder those men who had been a-faring with Thorgils. Lambi now rideth west into Laxwater-dale : he fareth first to Herdholt and told those kinsmen of his the whole tale of these doings that had come to pass in Skorradale. They liked it ill that he had been of the company: they said it ill beseemed him, and laid heavy wite upon him: he had now shown himself, said they, to be more akin to Thorbjorn Feeble than to Myrkjartan the Irish king. Lambi waxed much wroth at their words, and said that they were ill advised in casting gibes at him: for I have, quoth he, dragged you out of death. After this they sundered with few words, but either of them held the other in worse liking than before. Now rideth Lambi home to his abode. Thorgils Halla-son rideth now out to Holyfell, and with him those sons of Bolli and his foster-brethren Halldor and Ornolf. They came to Holyfell late in the evening, when all men were abed. Gudrun rose up and bade men get afoot and set meat before those men who were come. She goes to the hall and hails Thorgils and asks the tidings. Thorgils took the greeting of Gudrun: he had by then laid aside his weapons and his cape also: he sat up against a pillar, and was clad in a red-brown kirtle, and had about him a belt of silver very broad. Gudrun sitteth on the bench by him; Then spake Thorgils this stave:

At Helgi's life we drave,
to ravens corpse-meat gave,
fair-roundel-oak dyed red,
who fared where Thorleik led:
three smote we there to ground
all wholly peerless found,
keen helm-boles of the best:
now Bolli's wrongs have rest.

Gudrun then asketh diligently of the tidings that had befallen in this journey. Thorgils told her even as she asked of him. Gudrun said that the journey had sped passing well, and bade him have thank therefor. Now meat was set before them, and when they had eaten they were led to their beds: so they sleep all that night. The next day Thorgils betakes him to speech with Gudrun: and when they had talked for a time, then spake Thorgils : Now is it as thou wottest, Gudrun, that I have accomplished this faring to the which thou didst bid me: I deem too that the work has been put out of hand somewhat passing well: I ween also that I have done my duty therein: thou wilt also call to mind what thou didst

yea-say me in return; methinks my share of the bargain has been fulfilled. Then answereth Gudrun : No such long time has past since we took this rede that it has dropt out of my mind: that alone I deem to lie before me, that I should fulfil to thee all that was agreed upon : or how mindest thou what was spoken betwixt us? Thorgils said that she would know it. Gudrun answers: Methinks I pledged thee this: to be wedded to no man in this land other than thou. Or wilt thou perchance gainsay this at all? Thorgils said that she had told it rightly. Well is it then, saith Gudrun, if both of us have one remembrance hereof. Now I deem that there is no need to stretch this parley with thee to greater length: because I deem that it is not in store for me, quoth Gudrun, to become thy wife. Now. methinks I hold with thee all the letter of my bond though I be wedded to Thorkel Eyjolfson, since he is not here in the land. Then answereth Thor-gils, and reddened much: Full well methinks I wot whence this breaker runneth under my boat; thence hath cold rede ever come to me: I know that this is the rede of Snorri the Priest. Thorgils now springs up straightway from that talk, and was exceeding wroth. He goeth to his faring-fellows, and saith that he will ride thence straightway that same day. Thorleik liked it ill that it had been so brought about that Thorgils was little pleased: but Bolli was at one with his mother's will herein. Gudrun said that good gifts should be given to Thorgils, and gladden him in such wise. Thorleik said that this would not avail: An exceeding high-tempered man, quoth he, is Thorgils, so that he may not lout here for small matters. Gudrun said he must needs then find comfort at home. Hereafter rideth Thorgils from Holy-fell, and with him his foster-brethren. He fareth now homeward to Tongue, and is exceeding ill content with his lot. Now abideth he that winter at his homestead.

Chapter 66

That winter Osvif falleth sick and died: that was held to be mickle manscathe, because he had been a most wise man. Osvif was buried at Holy fell, because Gudrun had let build a church there. In that same winter also fell sick Guest Oddleifson. And when the sickness grew on him, then calleth he to him Thord the Low his son and spake: So saith my heart to me that this sickness shall end our life together: I will have me borne to Holy-fell, for that stead shall become of most account in this neighbourhood : thereover have I ofttimes seen a great light. After this died Guest. The winter had been a hard one, and there was mickle thrust of ice, and it stretched far out in Broadfirth, so that one might not go in ships from Bardstrand. The body of Guest lay two nights at Hagi. Then in the night arose a fierce wind, so that all the ice was driven from the land. But on the next day was the wind light and fair: then Thord took ship and laid aboard the body of Guest. They fare south all day across Broadfirth; in the evening they come to Holy fell: there is Thord made full welcome. He abideth there that night. On the day after was the body of Guest laid in earth, and he and Osvif slept in one grave. So was brought to pass the spae-word of Guest, that they should dwell nearer to one another; for at that time the one abode west on Bardstrand, and the other in Saelingsdale. Thord fared home. The next night after came on wild weather; then was all the ice driven on to the land: it held long that winter, so that none might fare there with ships. This men deemed a thing of much mark, that it gave thus for the faring with the body of Guest, but it might never be passed before or after.

Chapter 67

Thorarin hight a man: he dwelt in Longdale. He was a man that had a priesthood, but was in no wise mighty. His son hight Audgisl; he was a man light of foot. From the father and son took Thorgils Hallason the priesthood, and this they deemed to be the most bitter hurt. Audgisl fared unto Snorri the Priest, and told him of this uneven dealing, and bade him help them. Snorri answereth well by seeming, but made light of it altogether: He getteth now, this Halla-springald, pushing and mickle masterful. May Thorgils then meet with no man who will not thole all things from him? Of a surety he is a big man and well knit, yet have such men as he been brought to death ere now. Snorri gave to Audgisl an axe fairly bedight when he fared thence. In the spring fared Thorgils Hallason and

Thorstein the Black south to Burgfirth, and offered boot to the sons of Helgi and his other kin: they came to terms thereon, and fair atonement was there made. Thorstein paid two shares of the boot for the slaying, and offered fostering to Skorri Helgison. Thorgils was to pay one third part, and it was to be handed over at the Thing. That same summer rode Thorgils to the Thing, and when they came down on to the lava at the Meads, then saw they a quean come over against them; she was exceeding tall. Thorgils rode toward her, but she gave back, and spake this stave:

On, ye wight ones,
if ye deem you worthy:
yet beware therewith
of the wiles of Snorri:
ware may ye not be;
wise is Snorri.

After this went she her way. Then spake Thorgils: Seldom fared it so, when all was to be well, that thou shouldst fare from the Thing as I rode Thingward. Now rideth Thorgils to the Thing, and so to his booths: the Thing was quiet at the first. It came to pass on one day of the Thing that a cord was hung out to dry men's clothes. Thorgils had a blue cloak: it was spread on the wall of the booth. Men heard how the cloak spake this stave:Hangeth wet on the wall,hooded-cloak wots of a twist:washed... it is most times dry:yet I hide not it wotteth of twain. That was deemed the greatest marvel. The next day after went Thorgils west over the river, and should pay the fee to the sons of Helgi. He was set on the lava above the booths; with him was Halldor his foster-brother, and they were some few men in all. Those sons of Helgi came to the mote: Thorgils now betaketh him to the counting out of the silver. Audgisl Thorarinson went thereby, and then was Thorgils naming eleven: then hewed Audgisl at him: and all deemed they heard the head name eleven as it was sundered from the neck. Audgisl leapt towards the booths of the Waterfirthers; but Halldor leapt after him straightway, and hewed him in the booth-door to his bane. These tidings were brought to the booths of Snorri the Priest, that Thorgils Hallason is slain. Snorri makes answer: Ye must have heard a-wrong: he must have been the slayer, yon son of Halla. The man answereth: Nay, for the head was sundered from the body. Then it may be that it is sooth, saith Snorri. Atonement was made for the slaying, as it is told in the tale of Thorgils.

Chapter 68

The same summer that Thorgils Hallason was slain came the ship to Bearhaven that Thorkel Eyjolfson owned: he had then grown so wealthy a man that he owned two merchant vessels on the seas: the other came to Ramfirth, and both were laden with timber. And when Snorri the Priest learned the coming out of Thorkel Eyjolfson, then rideth he straightway to the ship. Thorkel greeted him as one that was all-fain of him, Thorkel had great store of drink aboard his ship; that was the most bounteous feast when Thorkel feasted Snorri and his faring-fellows: much was talked of betwixt them; Snorri asked tidings of Norway. Thorkel tells of all both well and clearly. Snorri telleth him also the tidings that had come to pass in the meantime in Iceland. Now liketh me that rede, saith Snorri, wherein I counselled thee ere thou faredst hence, that thou shouldst leave cheaping journeys and set thyself down in peace, and take to thyself a wife, even the same of whom we spake aforetime. Quoth Thorkel that he knew which way his words wended: I am also wholly of the same mind now as when we spake thereof; because I may not naysay a marriage so worshipful, if it may be brought to pass. Snorri answers and says that in this matter he was bidden and boun to further the business on his behalf: Now moreover are both these things out of the way that seemed to thee most hard to endure if thou shouldst behight fellowship with Gudrun; for Bolli is avenged, and Thorgils is out of the way. Answereth Thorkel; he said that Snorri's rede pierced deep, and (quoth he) surely he would wend that road. Snorri abode a-shipboard certain nights. Afterward they took a ten-oared pinnace that lay there by the

cheaping-ship, and made ready for the journey; and they were twenty-five men in all; then fared they to Holyfell in the pinnace. Gudrun gave to Snorri right good greeting, and to those men likewise that were a-faring with him; they were there well guested with good cheer. And when Snorri and Thorkel had been there one night, then Snorri calls Gudrun to speech with him: Thus the matter stands, saith he, that I have granted this journey to Thorkel Eyjolfson my friend: now is he come hither as thou seest: his errand here is to offer thee wedlock: Thorkel is a right worshipful man; thou hast full knowledge of his kinsfolk and his dealings, nor lacketh he fee: we deem him the likeliest of all men for chieftainship westaway here, if he will give himself to it: great renown hath Thorkel when he is out here, and yet much more worship when he is in Norway with men of high degree. Then Gudrun answers: My sons Thorleik and Bolli must have most to say hereto: but thou art the next man after them, Snorri, of whom I must ask counsel in matters that I deem of full mickle weight; because thou hast long been wholesome of rede to me. Snorri said that he deemed it wholly wise not to thwart Thorkel in the marriage. Now let Snorri call into their talk those brethren the sons of Gudrun. Therewith begins Snorri, and shows them how mickle strength will grow to them by means of Thorkel on account of his wealth and foresight: soft-spoken was he therein. Then answers Bolli to his speech: My mother must be best able to look to this; we will likewise be of one accord with her will herein: but surely we deem it redeful to lay much weight on this, Snorri, that thou art furthering this matter: because thou hast done full well by us in many wise. Then Gudrun took up the word: Much may we trust to the foresight of Snorri in this business: because thy rede hath alway been wholesome to us. But Snorri pushed it on by every word. Then was it agreed upon that this marriage shall come to pass betwixt Gudrun and Thorkel. Then was it talked of where the bridal should be. Snorri offered to give the feast at home. Thorkel said that this liked him well, and that there was no lack of goods to furnish whatever Snorri would have. Then spake Gudrun: This is my will, that this feast be holden here at Holyfell: in my eyes it is no drawback, saith she, that I should bear the costs thereof: I may in nowise crave of Thorkel or of any other man toil herein. Often showest thou, Gudrun, saith Snorri, that thou art more proud than other women. Thus then is it agreed among them, that the bridal shall be at Holyfell when six weeks are left of summer. Herewith fare Snorri and Thorkel thence: now Snorri fares homeward, and Thorkel to his ship: he abides that summer at Tongue or with his ship by turns. Now wears all the summer till the time appointed for the wedding feast. Gudrun had made ready there much abundance of victual. Snorri the Priest seeks to this feast with Thorkel, and they had with them in all wellnigh sixty men when they came to Holyfell, and had well chosen their company; most men there were in red raiment. Gudrun had bidden thither fully a hundred men. Those brethren Bolli and Thorleik went out to meet Snorri, and the guests with them. Snorri gat right good welcome, and his faring-fellows: now are their horses looked to, but Snorri and his folk are led into the parlour, and Thorkel's company garnished the higher bench, but the guests of Gudrun the lower.

Chapter 69

This summer had Gunnar Thidrandi's-bane been sent to Gudrun to ward and hold, and Gudrun had taken him in: his name was hidden. Gunnar had been made outlaw for the slaying of Thidrandi Geitison of Cross-wick, as is told of in the story of the Njardwickings. He fared with head close covered, because many mighty men were in the suit against him. The first evening of the feast, when men went to wash them, there stood a mickle man by the washing-stead: he was thick of shoulders and broad of breast: he had a hat on his head. Thorkel asked who he was. He named himself as it seemed good to him. Thorkel spake: Thou wilt not be speaking the sooth: liker art thou by thy look to Gunnar Thidrandi's-bane: and if thou be so mickle a champion as others say of thee, then mayst thou not will to hide thy name. Then spake Gunnar: Right gallantly speakest thou herein: methinks I need no longer hide myself from thee: thou hast rightly kenned thy man: or what art thou minded the rather to do with me? Said Thorkel that his will would be that he should learn that soon. He spake to his men that they should lay hands on him. Now Gudrun sat within on the thwart-dais, and women beside her there; and

they wore veils of linen on their heads. And when she is made ware of these tidings, then riseth she from the bride-bench and calleth on her men to bear aid to Gunnar: she bids them moreover spare no man who should show himself anywise dangerous. Gudrun had by far the greater host. Things looked like to end there far otherwise than had been thought on. Then went Snorri the Priest between men and bade them lull this storm: And this is plain for thee, Thorkel, that thou must not lay such stress hereon; thou mayst see now how proud is Gudrun, if she will have her way now against the twain of us. Thorkel gives out that he is pledged to Thorkel Geitison to slay Gunnar if he cometh anywhere west into the. countrysides: and he is my most friend, quoth he. Spake Snorri: Far more art thou bound to do after our will: and this is the most needful for thee thyself, since thou canst never get thee such another woman to wife as is Gudrun, though thou seek far and wide. Now what by the counsel of Snorri, and this therewith, that he saw that he spake the sooth, then was Thorkel appeased; but Gunnar was fetched thence that same evening, and the feast fared forward well and worshipfully. And when the bridal was ended, men make them ready to depart. Thorkel gave to Snorri the Priest gifts of right great price, and to all those men that were of most worth there. Snorri the Priest bade Bolli Bollison home to him and prayed him to abide there at all times that he deemed it good. Bolli yeasaith that: he rides with Snorri home to Tongue. But Thorkel dwells at Holyfell and takes on him the mastership of the house; and soon was it seen of him that he was no worse a man therein than in journeying. Straightway at harvest-tide he let pull down the hall, and it was built up again by winter; fair was it and stately. Now groweth mickle love betwixt Gudrun and Thorkel. So wears now the first winter of their life together. In the spring Gudrun asks Thorkel what he will do for Gunnar Thidrandi’s-bane. Thorkel said that she must the rather rule therein: thou hast aforetime taken up the matter so strongly that thou mayst not be quit unless he be let go on our part in seemly fashion. Gudrun said that he had guessed aright: I will, quoth she, that thou give him a ship, and such faring-goods as he may not do without. Then Thorkel answers, and smiled: Nowise little-hearted art thou in many ways, and unmeet were it for thee to be wedded to a man who was overmuch of a skinflint, nor is that what thou wouldst have: this shall be done according to thy will. Now this thing fares forth so that Thorkel gave to Gunnar a ship with all its gear. Gunnar took this gift right thankfully and said that never could he be so long-armed as to win repayment to them for all the goodwill that they showed him. The next summer fared Gunnar from Iceland and came to Norway. After that he fared to his homestead: he was a man of great wealth and mickle worth, and a good man of his hands.

Chapter 70

Thorkel Eyjolfson soon waxed a mickle chieftain; he held much by men’s repute of him. He was a man of might in that countryside and much given to matters of law, though here be his Thing-dealings untold. He was deemed to have gotten him that marriage that was of the most worship. Thorkel was the mightiest man in Broad-firth while he lived, next after Snorri the Priest. Thorkel upheld well the stead at Holyfell: he did do make all the house great and at great charges. He marked out likewise the ground for a church, and let it be known that he was minded to seek church-timber. Thorkel and Gud-run gat a son betwixt them : he was named Gellir : he had all the makings of a man in him as he waxed up. Bolli the son of Gudrun was by turns at Holyfell or at Tongue. Snorri loved him passing well. Thorleik his brother abode ever at Holyfell. Those brethren became mickle men and well knit, and Bolli was first in all things. Thorkel and those his stepsons agreed well together. Gudrun loved Bolli the best of all her children. And when Bolli was sixteen winters old, and Thorleik twenty, then Thorleik made known to Thorkel his stepfather, and to his mother, that he would fain fare from the land: It irks me now, saith he, to sit at home here as a daughter: I would some faring-goods were gotten me. Thorkel answers : Methinks I have not been wont to gainsay you brethren since the ties between us were made : I deem it much seemly that thou shouldst long to ken the ways of other men : because I trow that thou wilt be held for a valiant man whithersoever thou goest among doughty men. Quoth Thorleik that he would not be eager for much goods : he said that unclear was it how he might

see to it; because I am young and unredy in many wise. Thorkel said that he should have whatso he would. After this Thorkel buyeth a share in a ship on behalf of Thorleik ; that ship lay at Daymealness. Thorkel goes with him to the ship, and furnished him well from home every way. Thorleik fareth in that summer : the ship cometh to Norway : then was ruler in the land Olaf the Holy, Haraldson. Thorleik fareth straightway to find Olaf the king. The king greeted him well, and knew him by his kindred, and bade him abide with him. Thorleik yeasaid that. He is with the king that winter, and is made of his guard : the king held him in good liking. Thorleik was deemed the boldest of men. Thorleik was with the king until more than one winter was past. Now is it to be told of Bolli Bollison, that when he was eighteen winters of his age, in the spring he made known to Thorkel his stepfather and to Gudrun likewise that he would that they give over to him his father's heritage. Gudrun asketh him then what his mind is, that he calleth for the goods at their hands. Bolli answers : It is my will that a woman be bidden for on my behalf. This would I, kinsman Thorkel, that thou be the go-between for me herein that the suit may go forward. Thorkel asked what woman should be bidden for Bolli. Answereth Bolli: The woman hight Thordis : she is daughter to Snorri the Priest: she is the woman that I most long to have, and I shall not wed speedily if I get not my way in this : and I deem that all is at stake for me herein that this go forward. Thorkel answers : Just and right is it, kinsman, that I should take up this suit, if thou deem it of so much avail to thee : it is like that it will be no hard matter to deal with Snorri, because he will be able to see that the bidding is a good one whereas thou art. Spake Gudrun : Short is the word, saith she, that for this end I will spare nought that Bolli may get such a marriage as liketh him ; both for that I love him most, and moreover he hath been the gentlest of all my children in doing all according to my will. Thorkel said that he was minded for his own part to see that Bolli was well looked to: that is fitting for many causes : moreover methinks it like that good will be the man-cheap in Bolli. Now is this rede fully agreed to. And no long while after they betake them to the journey, to wit, Thorkel and Bolli, and were not right few men in all. Now fare they till they come to Tongue. Snorri greeted them full blithely: there have they the best of welcome at Snorri's hands. Thordis the daughter of Snorri was at home with her father, and was the fairest of women and the best of housewives. And when Thorkel and his company had been a few nights at Tongue, then Thorkel opened their errand to Snorri: for I will, quoth he, speak of an alliance with thee on behalf of Bolli my stepson, and for his marriage with Thordis thy daughter. Then answereth Snorri: Such a suit I call right welcome, as I deem it like to be of thee: I will give good answer to this suit, because methinks Bolli is the manfullest man: methinks the woman full well bestowed who is wedded to him. But yet must this weigh most herein, how the mind of Thordis is towards it; for she shall have that man only who is most to her heart. Now is this wooing told to Thordis, She answereth thus, that she will follow her father's foresight herein, but saith that she is more fain to be wedded to Bolli than to a man wholly unknown to her. And when Snorri knew that it was not against the heart of Thordis, and whereas many were they who much desired it: then Snorri too saw clearly that this was the worthiest match that might be, and gainsaid it not to his daughter. This is now agreed upon; now fared the betrothal forward. Snorri is to hold the marriage-feast at his house, and it shall be at midsummer. Herewith they ride thence, Thorkel and Bolli, and home to Holyfell: now is Bolli at home there till it wears to the time appointed for the bridal. Now they make them ready to depart, Thorkel and Bolli, and those men withal that were minded for the journey : that was a mickle company and full bravely arrayed. Now ride they on their way till they come to Tongue; there get they all-blithe welcome : a mickle company was there and a feast most worshipful. And when the feast draweth to a close, men make them ready to fare thence. Snorri gave to Thorkel Eyjolfson seemly gifts, and to Gudrun in like wise; such like also to other of his friends and kinsmen. Now rideth home to his own place each of those men who had sought to that guesting. Bolli abode yet at Tongue. Soon grew mickle love betwixt Bolli and Thordis, and good was their life together. Snorri spent full mickle pains in entreating Bolli well; he was more to him than his own sons. Bolli too was glad thereat: he abides at Tongue all those seasons after that he was wedded. The next summer came a ship into Whitewater: half that ship was owned by Thorleik Bollison, and half by Norsemen. And when Bolli his brother learned his coming out, then rideth he

straightway south to Burgfirth and to the ship in Whitewater: either of those brethren was full fain of the other. Bolli abides there certain nights: then ride both westward to Holy fell. Thorkel greeteth Thorleik much blithely and Gudrun likewise, and they bade him abide with them through the winter. Quoth Thorleik that he would yeasay that. Now tarrieth he at Holyfell for a space : then he rides to Whitewater and lets lay up his ship and flit her lading westward. Thorleik had won good store of wealth and worship, because he had put his hands betwixt those of the mightiest of men, even Olaf the king, as is afore written. Thorleik was at Holyfell that winter, but Bolli at Tongue with Snorri his wife's father.

Chapter 71

Through the winter are they ever meeting, Thorleik and Bolli, and had speech between them. They take part neither in game nor sport, nor in any other glee. And one time was Thorleik a-guesting at Tongue. Then talked those brethren so that all the day wore in their talk: then deemed Snorri that he knew that they must be planning some great matter. Then went Snorri to speak with those brethren. They greeted Snorri and let fall their talk; he took well their greeting, and then spake Snorri : What rede-taking have ye, that ye reck neither of sleep nor meat? Bolli answereth: No taking of rede is this, for that tale is of little mark that we have to talk about. So Snorri knew that they would hide from him all that which was in their hearts, but yet he misdoubted him that they must speak of that which should work sore trouble if it went forward. Then spake Snorri yet again to those brethren : It misdoubteth me that it will be neither folly nor gamesomeness that ye twain be so long a-talking over : and I hold you in no wise to blame if it be so : now therefore do ye well by me also and hide it not from me. We shall be able to take no worse rede in this matter all together than ye twain alone, since never will I withstand the furtherance of aught whereby your honour shall be more than it was aforetime. Thorleik deemed that Snorri promised fairly, and told him in few words all their mind, to wit, that they are minded to fare against those sons of Olaf, and they may avail to make a hard bargain of it with them : they say that they lack nought to have all they will from such men as were Halldor and his brethren, now that Thorleik had put his hands betwixt the hands of Olaf the king, and Bolli had become son-in-law to Snorri, such a chieftain as he was. Saith Snorri that the slaying of Bolli was fully atoned when Helgi Hardbeinson was the payment made; over-mickle, quoth he, was the trouble of men though it were stayed thenceforth. Bolli spake: How is it now, Snorri? Art thou nought so eager to aid as thou gavest out a short while since? And Thorleik should not even now have told thee of our minds if I had ruled therein. And whereas thou tellest that Helgi's death was the avenging of Bolli, yet is it known of men that fee was paid for the slaying of Helgi; so is my father yet unbooted. And when Snorri saw that his words won them not to change of mood, then he offers to bid for ransom sooner than that manslaying should be begun among men : and those brethren yeasay that. Thereafter rode Snorri to Herdholt with certain men: Halldor greeted him well, and bade him abide there: Snorri said that he must ride homeward that same evening, but yet made known that he had weighty business with him. Afterward they betake them to talk: and Snorri then showed forth his errand: he said that he had learned that those brethren, Thorleik and Bolli, would no longer endure to leave their father unbooted at the hands of Olaf's sons; and now would I seek for ransom, and wot if an end may be set to the ill-luck of you kinsmen. Halldor took this not amiss. Well known is it, quoth he, that Thorgils Hallason and the sons of Bolli were minded to do me a mischief ere thou didst turn away the avenging on their part, so that thenceforth they set themselves to the slaying of Helgi Hardbeinson ; and thou hast played a good part in these matters, whatsoever thou mayst have done in the earlier dealings betwixt us kinsmen. Quoth Snorri that he set much store by a good outcome of his errand, if he might so bring it to pass as was most to his heart, that good peace might be made between those kinsmen, and that they should keep faith one with the other: For known to me is the temper of those men who have to deal in this matter with you, that they will surely keep all that whereto they are pledged. Halldor answers : This will I yeasay for my part, if it be the will of my brethren, to pay such fee for the slaying of Bolli

as those men doom who are chosen to that end. But I will that there be nought said of outlawry against any man, or of my priesthood and holding : the like will I also claim for those lands whereon my brethren dwell, that they own them freely for all the issue of this suit: let either side take its own man for the award. Snorri said that he deemed that Halldor bade well and fairly : quoth he that those brethren should take this choice if they would in any wise be ruled by him. Now he rode home sithence, and saith to those brethren, how his errand had sped, and this therewith, that he would drop their matters once and for all if they would not yeasay this choice. Then Bolli bade him look to it, and appointed Snorri to doom the case on behalf of those brethren. Then Snorri sendeth word to Halldor that they agreed to atonement, and bade him choose a man to meet with him for the giving the award. Halldor chose thereto Steinthor Thorlakson of Ere. The meeting for atonement should be at The Rocks on Shawstrand when four weeks were worn of summer. Thereafter rode Thorleik home to Holyfell, and thenceforth all the winter were there no tidings. And when it wore to the time appointed for the meeting, then came Snorri the Priest with those sons of Bolli, and they were in all fifteen in company. A like number came with Steinthor to the mote. Snorri and Steinthor betook them to speech together, and made covenant concerning the matter. Then they named the fine: but it is not told how much they awarded. Hereof is it said that the money was duly paid and the agreement was held on both sides. At Thorsness Thing was the were-gild handed over. A good sword gave Halldor to Bolli, and Steinthor gave Thorleik a shield, and that was the best of jewels. Now ended the Thing, and both sides were deemed to have waxed in these dealings.

Chapter 72

Now after Bolli and Thorleik were made at one with the sons of Olaf, and Thorleik had been one winter in Iceland, then Bolli gave out that he was minded to fare abroad. Snorri would let him from going: Methinks there is much risk how things may go with thee. Now, if thou art fain to have greater rule than thou bearest already, I will give thee a holding and build a house for thee, and therewith put a chieftainship into thy hand and hold thee for a man of worship in all wise; it is like that this will be easy, inasmuch as most men are well minded toward thee. Then saith Bolli: This have I long had in my heart, to go from home for a time: methinks a man is but few-learned if he wot nought of the world wider than Iceland here. But when Snorri sees that Bolli is fully set hereon, and that he may not avail to let him, then Snorri biddeth him to have goods as much as he will for his journey. Bolli said that he would not naysay this, to have much goods: I will, quoth he, be bedesman to no man, be it here or in the outlands. A little after he and Snorri had thus spoken together, Bolli rideth south to Whitewater in Burgfirth : he buys half that ship from those men who had the charge of her; so now both those brethren owned the ship together. Now rides Bolli westward again. Bolli and Thordis had one daughter: she hight Herdis: that may Gudrun bade to fostering: she was then one winter old when she fared to Holy fell. Thordi likewise was ofttimes there, for Gudrun loved her full well.

Chapter 73

Now fared those brethren both to the ship in Whitewater. Bolli had full mickle goods with him. Now they get the ship ready; and when they were boun, they put out to sea: nought speedy was their voyage, and they were long aboard: they made Norway at harvest: they came to Throndhjem. Olaf the king was east in the land and sat in the Wick, for there was he wont to make his winter-seat. And when those brethren knew that the king was not to be looked for north in Throndhjem at harvest, then saith Thorleik that he was of this mind, that they should seek* eastward along the land and fare to meet Olaf the king. Bolli saith : Little am I fain to be driven from one cheaping-town to another in the harvest-tide: mickle need and unfreedom meseems that. I will sit here in Throndhjem the winter through. Now is it told us that the king will most like come north in the spring: but if he come not then, I may not let it that we fare to meet him. Bolli has his way herein : they clear their ship now and

hire a dwelling for themselves in the town. Soon it was seen that Bolli was a masterful man, and would be before other men : it came to pass also with him, because he was an openhanded man, that he soon won much worship in Norway. Bolli kept a following all the winter in Throndhjem. This too was well seen, that, to whatsoever tavern he went, his men were better furnished with clothing and weapons than the other townsfolk : moreover he alone paid scat for all his fellows when they were at the taverns. In like fashion was he openhanded and highminded about other matters. Now abide those brethren in the town all winter. That winter had Olaf the king set himself down east in Sarpsborg, and the word fared north to Throndhjem that the king was not like to come westward. Early in the spring those brethren made ready their ship and were minded to make eastward for the Wick. Then fare they east along the land. Now well sped their journey, and they came east to the Burg, and fared straightway to find Olaf the king. The king greeteth well Thorleik his henchman, and those men who were there a-faring with him; and asketh: Who is yon big man and fair who goeth with thee? Thorleik answers: Lord, quoth he, that is my brother, and he hight Bolli. Assuredly he is a fine man, saith the king. Now the king biddeth them abide with him, and that choice take they thankfully. They abide now with the king that spring. The king is no worser to Thorleik than when he was with him aforetime; but yet he reckoned Bolli by far the foremost, because he showed himself peerless among men. And when the spring was worn, then take those brethren rede about their journeying : Thorleik asks whether Bolli will fare out to Iceland that summer, -- Or wilt thou abide longer here in Norway? Bolli answers: For myself I am minded to neither of those ways whereof thou speakest now : sooth to say, Thorleik, quoth he, this had I in my heart whenas I fared hither from Iceland, that I should not be told of as if I were in a neighbour's house : I will, Thorleik, that thou take to thee the ship which we both own. Saith Thorleik that it forthinketh him much if they must sunder fellowship : but thou, Bolli, must have thy way in this as in other things. This same rede bare they before the king. The king answered them in this wise : Wilt thou, Bolli, quoth he, not tarry longer with us? me-thinks this way is best, that thou abide yet with us for a space : then will I give thee the same rank as I gave to Thorleik thy brother. Then answers Bolli: Full fain were I, lord, to bind myself in thy hand : but now will I first of all fare thither whereof I am fain; and this choice will I take gladly if it should come to pass that I return. Thou must needs rule concerning thy journeying, Bolli, quoth the king : for ye Icelanders are for the more part a stiff-necked people : and yet will I end with this word, that I deem thee, Bolli, to be the man of most mark that has come from Iceland in my day. And when Bolli had taken leave of the king he maketh him ready for his journey. He went aboard a roundship that was bound south for Denmark; he had mickle fee with him : there fared also with him some men of his following. He and Olaf the king parted in much friendship ; the king gave gifts to Bolli at their parting. Thorleik abode behind with the king. But Bolli went on his way till he comes south to Denmark: he abides that winter there in Denmark, and gat him much worship from men of high degree : he bore himself there too with no whit less brave a show than when he was in Norway. Now when Bolli had been one winter in Denmark, he makes him ready to fare from the land. He letteth not his journey till he cometh south out to Micklegarth : he had been there but a little while ere he was made of the Vaerings: we have not heard it told that any Northman had come to speech with the Garth-king before Bolli Bollison. He was in Micklegarth full many winters,and was deemed the hardiest of men in all trials of manhood, and he ever went with the foremost. All-mickle deemed the Vaerings of Bolli's worth the while he was out in Micklegarth.

Chapter 74

Now is the tale to be told of whereas was Thorkel Eyjolfson. He sitteth now in his chieftainship. Gellir the son of him and Gudrun waxed up at home there at Holyfell and was early a manly wight and well-beloved. This is told of, that one time Thorkel told Gudrun his dream. So I dreamed, quoth he, that I had a beard so great that methought it covered all Broadfirth. Gudrun saith: What deemest thou this dream to betoken? Of a surety I deem that my rule shall stretch over all Broadfirth. It may be so,

quoth Gudrun : yet my mind thereof is that thou shalt dip thy beard down into Broadfirth. That same summer Thorkel putteth out his ship and made it ready for Norway. Gellir his son was then of twelve winters. Thorkel launched from Thorsness: and he gave out that he was minded to seek church-timber, as was written afore. Now sails Thorkel to sea straightway: he got a calm passage, yet not right speedy, and taketh Norway northerly. Then sat Olaf the king in Throndhjem. Thorkel sought the king straightway, and Gellir his son, and had there right good welcome: so mickle honour had Thorkel of the king that winter that it is commonly told that the king gave to Thorkel no less wealth than ten tens of marks of burnt silver. To Gellir also gave he a cloak at Yule, and that was the most costly treasure. That winter let the king build a church in the town of timber : it was laid out for a right mickle minster, and all was picked therefor : and in the spring was flitted to the ship that timber which the king gave Thorkel: thereto came timber both good and great, for Thorkel looked to it; he was at the felling and flitting all spring. It came to pass early one morning when the king went out with few men, that he saw a man aloft on that church which was then a-smithing in the town. He wondered much at this, for it was as yet earlier in the morning than the smiths were wont to rouse themselves. Then soon marked the king that there was Thorkel Eyjolfson : he saw to what he was about; for he was measuring all the greatest beams, both cross-pieces and sills and upright beams. The king turned thither whereas Thorkel was, and spake: What is it now, Thorkel? Art thou minded to frame after this fashion the church-timber that thou flittest to Iceland? Saith Thorkel that this was sooth. Then spake Olaf the king: Hew thou off two ells from every main-beam, and that church will yet be the greatest builded in all Iceland. Then answered Thorkel: This is my will, that thou take the timber to thee again if thou deem that thou hast given me overmuch, or if it be thy pleasure to have it back: but I will not hew one ell’s length thereof: I may well toil and strive to win me other timber. Now is it, Thorkel, quoth the king, that thou art of mickle worth, yet full proudly thou bearest thyself: because I surely deem it overweening that any bonder should match himself with us. But it is not sooth that I grudge thee the timber, if so be it befall thee to build a church therewith : for it may not be so great that all thy pride will lie therein. But thuswise my heart forbodes, that little gain will be to men of this timber, and furthermore that thou shalt not get done even one man’s work upon the timber. After this they sunder speech. The king turneth away, and it was marked that he was none the better pleased that Thorkel recked nought of that which he enjoined him. Yet the king let no wind of this get abroad. He and Thorkel parted in the most goodliking. Now goes Thorkel a-shipboard: when he is boun he puts out to sea. Well went it with him: they were but a short while at sea. Thorkel brought his ship into Ramfirth. He rode straight from the ship to Holyfell: now were men fain of them : Thorkel had won much renown of this journey. He let lay up his ship and fence it about. He gat warding of the church-timber whereas it was welcome, since he might not flit it overland that harvest, for he was ever full of work. Now Thorkel sitteth at home on his stead all that winter. He had Yule-drinking at Holy fell, and there was a great company, and in all wise made he much show that winter. Gudrun letted this not: saith she that for this was wealth of use, that men should make themselves greater thereby: Thorkel too had laid out much wealth in fair jewels, which he shared among his friends through the winter.

Chapter 75

That winter after Yule Thorkel made him ready to fare from home, and was minded to seek north to Ramfirth to flit southward his timber. He rides first into the Dales, and thence to Leashaws to Thorstein his kinsman, and there gathers to him men and horses; then he fares north to Ramfirth. Thorkel tarries there in the north a space and takes rede for the journey, and swept the firths again for horses, because he would not make more journeys than one of it, if it might be so devised: all this was no speedy work. Thorkel was about these flittings until the Long-fast. Now comes Thorkel south with more than thirty horses. He layeth up the timber on Lea-ere, and was minded to flit it thence by ship to Holyfell. Thorstein owned a mickle ferry which he used for flitting goods: that ship was Thorkel minded to have. Thorkel abode at Leashaws through the Fast, for those kinsmen loved each other well.

Thorstein put forward this to Thorkel, that it would be meet that they should fare to Herdholt: I will make offer for land of Halldor Olafson; for he hath had little loose-fee since he paid boot to the sons of Bolli for their father: and that is land which I would liefest own. Thorkel bade him do as he would. So now they fare, and came to Herdholt, and -were together well a twenty men. Halldor gave them the best of welcomes, and they had much speech together. Not many men were at home there, for Halldor had sent men north to Steingrimsfirth; a whale had come ashore there in the which he had a share. Beinir the Stark was then his homeman : he was alone left alive of those men who had been with Olaf his father. Spake Halldor to Beinir: Plainly I see the errand of these kinsmen, that they mean to make offer for my land of me: and if it be as I guess they will lead me aside to talk : and I guess that one of them will set himself on either hand of me: and if they offer me any unseemliness, then be thou no slower to deal with Thorstein than I shall be with Thorkel: thou hast long been true to us kinsmen. I have sent for men to the nighest steads. I were fain that these two things should fall together, to wit, the coming of that company and the sundering of our speech. Now when the day was worn, then Thorstein made suit to Halldor that they should fall to speech all together: We have an errand with thee. Halldor saith that it pleased him well. Thorstein spake to his faring-fellows that it needed not to go with them. Beinir went after Halldor none the less, because he deemed that things were faring much as Halldor forecast. They went forth into the homefield no very short way. Halldor had over him a seamed cloak, and on it a long brooch, as then was used. Now he sat him down and on either hand of him one of those kinsmen; and they sat close to him upon his cloak, but Beinir stood near by over Thorstein and had a great axe in his hand. Then Thorstein took up the word: This is my errand hither, that I will buy thy land of thee: and I put this forward to be talked over now, because now is Thorkel my kinsman with me: methinks it is no ill bargain for both of us, since it is told me that thou hast scant loose-fee, and land is dear of upkeep: I will give thee in return such payment as is seemly, and thereto as much as we twain shall agree upon. Halldor took this not amiss at the beginning, and they set themselves to the cheapening. And when they thought that he was not far from yielding, Thorkel broke strongly into the talk and would have them strike the bargain between them. Then Halldor drew back before them; but they followed up stiffly: and thereafter it came to pass that the end was the further off the nearer they pushed it. Then Thorkel took up the word and spake: Seest thou not, kinsman Thorstein, how this fareth? He has dragged out this business before us all the day, and we are set here for his mockery and beguiling; now if thy heart is in the land-cheap, must we fall to pressing the matter closely. Thorstein said that he would fain wot for his part: he bade Halldor now come out of the dark and say if he would grant the land-cheap or not. Methinks, quoth Halldor, it needeth not to fare in the mirk herein, that thou must ride cheapless home to-night. Then answers Thorstein: Methinks too it needeth not to hold back from setting forth what is in our minds, to wit, that there are two choices before thee: since we deem that we now have rock beneath our feet by reason of our company. That one choice is that thou do this of good will and have our friendship therefor; that other is, and it is of a surety the worser lot, that thou stretch out thy hand perforce and handsel me the land of Herdholt. And when Thorstein spake thus Halldor springs up so hard that the brooch of his cloak was riven; and then he spake : Other thing will come to pass ere I say that which I will not. And what may that be? quoth Thorstein. This, that a poleaxe shall be smitten into thy head by a man of least account, and so quench thine overweening and injustice. Thorkel saith that this is ill spoken: and to us it seems like that it will not come to pass ; and now I hold that there is full cause that Halldor should give up his land and have no fee therefor. Then answers Halldor: Sooner shalt thou clutch the tangle in Broadfirth than I handsel the lands of Herd-holt perforce. Now gods Halldor home after this: then drift men to the stead, even those for whom he had sent. Thorstein was wood wroth, and bade set upon Halldor straightway. Thorkel bade do not so, and said that it would be most unseemly at such a season; but as soon as it is worn we shall not let a meeting between us. Halldor saith that he will never be unready for them if the issue must needs be tried. After this they rode away, and those kinsmen took counsel together about their journey. Thorstein said that this might most meetly be told thereof, that the meeting was most untoward: but how wast thou so slow, Thorkel, in dealing with Halldor, to do him some dishonour?

Sawest thou not Be’tnir the Stark, quoth Thorkel, as he stood over thee with uplifted axe? And that was the greatest risk, because he would have straightway smitten the axe into thy head had I made show of doing aught. Now they ride home to Leashaws. Now wears the fast until Holy Week comes.

Chapter 76

On Holy Thursday, early in the morning, Thorkel gave out that he must make ready for his journey. Thorstein letted this strongly: For the weather seems to me unsure. Thorkel said that the weather should be of the best avail: Thou shalt not let me now, kinsman, since I must be home by Easter. Now Thorkel launches the ferry, whatso Thorstein may say, and they loaded the boat. Thorstein bore out as fast as Thorkel’s men bore in. Then spake Thorkel: Let be now, Thorstein my kinsman, and hinder not our journey: now canst thou not have thy way herein at this time. Answers Thorstein: Now shall rule that one of us twain who may fare the worse thereby: and I dread that sore trouble may come of this journey. Thorkel bade him hail and farewell. Now goeth Thorstein home much unglad, and went into the parlour, and bade lay somewhat beneath his head: and so was it done. The servingwoman saw that the tears rolled from his eyes on to the pillow. And a little after he had laid him adown there smote a mickle din of wind against the house. Then spake Thorstein: There may we now hear din the bane of Thorkel my kinsman. Now is it to be told of the faring of Thorkel: he sailed all day out over Broadfirth: he had with him on the ship ten men or twelve. The wind took to freshening much as the day wore, and it grew to be the fiercest storm ere it fell. They sought forward on their way because the men aboard were good at need. Thorkel had with him the sword Skofnung, and it was in a chest. Thorkel and his fellows sail on now till they came to Bearisles in Broadfirth. Men saw their journey from both strands. And when they were come thither, a blast smote the sail and overturned the ship. And Thorkel was drowned, and all those men that were with him. The timber drave wide about the isles: the corner-staves were thrown up on the isle that is since called Staff-isle. Skofnung had been fast in the ferry within her inner timbers: he was found on Skofnung-skerry. Now on that same evening of the day whereon Thorkel and his mates were drowned, it came to pass at Holyfell that Gudrun went to the church. And as she came to the churchgarth lithe, she saw a wraith stand before her: he louted over her, and spake : Mickle tidings, Gudrun, quoth he. She answereth: Hold thou then thy tongue over them, thou fiend, quoth she. Then went Gudrun to the church even as she had been minded afore. And when she came to the church, then she seemed to see that Thorkel and his folk were come home, and all stood out before the church; and she saw that the sea ran off their raiment. She spake nought therewith, but went into the church, and abode there such space as seemed good to her: now goeth she home, and to the parlour, because she thought that Thorkel might have gone thither; but when she came into the parlour there was no man there. Then was Gudrun sore amazed at all this that had come to pass together. On Long Friday Gudrun sendeth men, some in along the Strands, and some around the isles, to get knowledge of the faring of Thorkel’s folk: by then was the wreckage thrown up far and wide about the isles and likewise upon either strand. On the Saturday before Easter were the tidings known, and were deemed great, because Thorkel had been the most man of mark, Thorkel had eight winters of the fifth teen when he was drowned, and that was four winters before Olaf the Holy fell. Mickle thought Gudrun of the loss of Thorkel, and yet she bare herself right stoutheartedly. Few or none of the church-timbers came to hand. Gellir Thorkelson was then of thirteen winters when his father was lost: then took he to the warding of the stead with his mother, and he took over therewith the chieftainship of men which Thorkel had had. Soon was it plainly seen of him that he was well fashioned to be a man of mark. Gudrun became a woman much given to the faith: she was the first of women in Iceland to learn the psalter: she was long anights in the church at her prayers. Herdis Bolli’s-daughter fared ever out with her anights. Gudrun loved Herdis much. It is told that one night the may Herdis dreamed that a quean came to her: she was in a gown of web and had a folded kerchief on her head; nought wraith-like seemed the quean to her. She took up the word: Tell this to thy granddame, that ill pleased am I with her, for that she welters upon me every night and lets fall down

on me drops so hot that I am all-to-burned therewith- And yet I tell thee this hereto, that meliketh thee better, though something strange hangs about thee; but yet might I endure it if I deemed not that I was like to be worser there whereas Gudrun is. After this the may woke and told the dream to Gudrun. Gudrun saith that she deemed the vision a good one. In the morning let Gudrun take up the boards in the church floor whereas she was oftenest wont to fall on the knee-bed. There she lets dig, and thereunder were bones found; they were blue, and ill to look upon. There was found also a brooch, and a mickle rune-staff. Men deemed then that it was plain that this must have been some spaewife : then the bones were borne far away whereas fewest were the ways of men.

Chapter 77

Now when four winters were worn from the drowning of Thorkel Eyjolfson, a ship came into Isle-firth : Bolli Bollison owned her: most men on the ship were Norsemen. Bolli had full much wealth with him and many treasures of price, the which chieftains had given to him. Bolli was then a man of so great show when he came out from this journey that he would wear no other raiment than clothes of scarlet or of peltries ; and all his weapons were gold-bedight. He was called Bolli the Proud. He made known to his shipmates that he was minded to go westward to his own country. He put his ship for warding and the rest of his goods in the hands of his fellows. Now Bolli rides from the ship, and they were twelve men in all: all those followers of Bolli were clad in scarlet and rode on gilded saddles : all these were men right bravely arrayed, and yet their chief surpassed them. Bolli was in the raiment of peltries that the Garth-king had given him: he had over all a cape of red scarlet; he was girded with Footbiter, whose hilts were now gold-bedight, and his middle wound about with gold : he had a gilded helm on his head; he bare a red shield by his side, and drawn thereon a knight in gold, the which he had won out in Micklegarth: he had also in his hand an anlace, as is the wont of the Outlands. And wheresoever they took guesting the women gave heed to nought else than gazing on their display and proud bearing. And in such splendour rideth Bolli through the countrysides westward till he comes to Holyfell. Gudrun is full fain of him. Bolli tarried there no long time ere he rode east to Saelingsdale-tongue to see Snorri his wife’s father and Thordis his wife: there likewise was the most joyful meeting. Snorri bade Bolli abide with him and as many of his men as he would. Bolli yeasaid this: he abides with Snorri that winter, and those men who had fared north with him. Bolli became so renowned a man by this journey that it was known over all the land. Snorri laid no less love on Bolli now than when he was with him aforetime.

Chapter 78

But when Bolli had been one winter in Iceland, Snorri the Priest fell sick: the sickness worked nought speedily at first. Snorri lay very long. But when he knew that the sickness waxed on him, then summoned he to him his kindred and others bounden to him in blood: he spake to Bolli his son-in-law: This is my will, quoth he, that thou take over the homestead here and the chieftainship of men after my day, in that I hold thee worthy of no less worship than my sons. Now is that son of mine not here in the land whom I take to be the most man of them, and that is Halldor. After this died Snorri the Priest: he had then eight winters of the seventh teen. That was one winter after the fall of Olaf the Holy. So told Ari the Learned. Snorri was buried at Tongue. Bolli and Thordis took over the homestead as Snorri had bidden: the sons of Snorri gave out that this liked them well. Bolli had ever a great company and was right well beloved. Herdis the daughter of Bolli and Thordis waxed up at Holyfell and was the fairest of all women. Orm the son of Hermund the son of Illugi the Black wooed her to wife: Herdis was wedded to Orm. She fared with him to his homestead at Kalmanstongue. Their son was Kodran, who had to wife Gudrun Sigmund’s daughter. The son of Kodran hight Hermund; he wedded Alfeid the daughter of Runolf the son of Ketil the bishop; their sons were Ketil who was abbot of Holyfell and Hrein, Kodran and Styrmi. The daughter of Orm and Herdis Bolli’s-daughter hight Thorvor: she

was wedded to Skeggi Brandson: thence is come the kin of the Shaw-wights. Ospak hight the son of Bolli and Thordis. The daughter of Ospak Bollison hight Gudrun: she was wedded to Thorarin Brandson: their son was Brand, who stablished the stead at House-fell : his son was Sighvat the priest, who abode there long after. Now Gellir Thorkelson took a wife : he wedded Valgerd daughter of Thorgils the son of Ari of Reek-ness: he became a mickle chieftain. Gellir fared in and was with Magnus the Good, and had of him twelve ounces of gold and much other fee. The sons of Gellir were these, Thorkel and Thorgils: the son of Thorgils was Ari the Learned: the son of Ari hight Thorgils; his son was Ari the Stark. Now Gudrun Osvif's-daughter began to age much, and lived in such grief as hath been told of. She was the first nun in Iceland, and was an anc-ress at the last. This too is commonly said, that Gudrun hath been the most renowned of women even born with her here in the land. It is told that one time Bolli came to Holyfell. Gudrun deemed it wondrous well when Bolli came to see her. He sat long by her, and they talked of many things. Then spake Bolli: Wilt thou tell me this, mother, that I am full of longing to know; what man hast thou most loved? Gudrun answereth: Thorkel was the mightiest man and the most chieftain ; but no man was better knit than Bolli, or a man better in all wise: Thord Ingunson was the wisest of them and the best man of law: Thorvald count I nought. Then answereth Bolli: Clearly do I wot that whereof thou tellest me, how it was with each of those husbands of thine : and yet deem I that it hath not yet been told me which man thou lovedst most: I pray thee hide it from me no longer. Hard dost thou push for this, son mine, quoth Gudrun: yet if I should tell it to any I would choose thee thereto. Bolli bade her do so. Then spake Gudrun: To him was I worst whom I most loved. Methinks, quoth Bolli, now hath all been told openly : he said that she had done well to tell him that which he asked of her. Now leave they this talk. Bolli then fareth home. Gudrun became an old woman, and it is the tale of men that she grew sightless, Gudrun died at Holy fell, and there resteth she. Gellir Thorkelson abode at Holy-fell till he was old, and much worthy of mark is told of him ; he cometh moreover into many a tale. He let build a church at Holyfell great and worshipful, as Arnor Earl-skald beareth witness in that arval-lay which he made on Gellir, and therein telleth he plainly hereof. But when Gellir waxed old, he makes him ready to fare from the land. He cometh to Norway and abideth there a little space. Thereafter he fareth from the land and cometh south to Rome, and seeketh to holy Peter the Apostle. He tarrieth in this journey much long time ; then he fareth northward again till that he cometh to Denmark. And when Gellir is come thither, then falleth he sick, and lay a much long time, and gat all his rights at the last. After that he died, and his death was deemed to be full worthy of mark. He rests at Roskilde. Gellir had Skofnung with him, and never after was he gotten back : that was the sword which was taken out of the howe of Hrolf Crow. But when the death of Gellir was known in Iceland, then took Thorkel his son the heritage at Holy-fell; but Thorgils Gellison was drowned young in Burg-firth with all his ship's crew. Thorkel Gellison was a man of most avail and the most learned of men. And there now endeth the tale.